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The Franco-German War

OF

1870-71.

THE

FRANCO-GERMAN WAR

OF

1870-71

BY

FIELD-MARSHAL
COUNT HELMUTH VON MOLTKE

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TRANSLATED BY

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WITH A MAP

IN TWO VOLUMES

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THE FRANCO-GERMAN WAR.

IV.

FIGHTING ROUND PARIS.

Paris in November.

The report, which became known on the 14th November, of the happy result of the action at Coulmiers on the 9th, had raised new hopes in Paris. No one any longer doubted that the enemy would find it necessary to send large forces in that direction, which would considerably weaken the investing lines, particularly in the south.

In order to assist the hoped-for relief by independent action when the time came, three armies were formed out of the garrison of Paris.

The first, under General Clément Thomas, consisted of 226 battalions of the National Guard, in round numbers 130,000 men. They were to defend the city walls and maintain peace in the city. The second, under General Ducrot, included the most trusty elements, particularly the troops which had hitherto constituted the XIIIth and the XIVth Corps. This army was divided into three Corps

and one Division of Cavalry, consisting of fully 100,000 men and more than 300 guns. They were intended for active service in the field, and for making sorties on the investing forces. The third army, under General Vinoy, 70,000 strong, consisted of six regiments of the Garde-Mobile, and one Division of Cavalry; and Maud'huy's Infantry Division was also distributed among them. They were to support the more important sorties by making feints against the foremost besieging lines. Besides these, 80,000 of the Garde-Mobile were in the forts, and 35,000 men at St.-Denis under Admiral de la Ronciere.

The available fighting power consequently amounted to above 400,000 men.

The garrison exhibited a remarkable activity in small night engagements. The heavy guns in the place would carry as far as Choisy-le-Roi, and even to Beauregard, near Versailles. They worked hard in the trenches on the peninsula of Gennevilliers and constructed a military bridge. Several things showed that the French intended to make an attempt on the west. But since, as long as the IInd Army was still incomplete, the greatest danger threatened the Germans from the south, their Commander-in-Chief, as already mentioned, kept the IInd Corps behind the Yvette from Villeneuve to Saclay. On the north of Paris the Corps of Guards spread them-

selves out to the left towards Aulnay, the XIIth crossed to the south bank of the Marne, and the Wurtemburg Division moved to the position left vacant by the IInd Corps, between the Marne and the Seine.

On November 18th the summons came to Paris from Tours to effect a prompt connection with the Army of the Loire, somewhat prematurely, as we know, since that army was still deliberating about merely defensive measures.

In Paris, arrangements were, indeed, being made for a great sortie. But as the earlier attacks on the centre of the VIth Corps had shown that this had been considerably strengthened by fortifications at Thiais and Chevilly, it was decided to reach the uplands east of Joinville and from thence to turn off to the south. The attention of the Germans was to be diverted by means of attacks in the opposite direction.

On the 18th, the day on which the Army of Orleans had vainly endeavoured to press on towards Beaune-la-Rolande, General Ducrot assembled the IInd Paris Army in the neighbourhood of Vincennes, and the IIIrd, with Hugues's Division, occupied Mont-Avron on the following day. As, however, the construction of bridges at Champigny and Bry was not yet completed, battle was postponed till the 30th; but it was left to the leaders

of the minor engagements to carry them into effect simultaneously or separately. Accordingly, Maud'huy's Division collected during the night of the 29th behind the redoubt at Hautes-Bruyères, and marched towards L'Hay before daybreak.

Warned by the heavy firing from the southern forts, General von Tümpling had ordered the 12th Division to get under arms early in their positions, and the 11th to assemble at Fresnes.

The French, favoured by the darkness, made their way through the vineyards into L'Hay; yet they were successfully driven back by the Germans with the bayonet and clubbed arms.

After continuing the firing for some time, the French renewed their onslaught at 8.30, but without success; and then the defenders, reinforced from the reserve, replied with a vigorous charge. At ten o'clock the enemy retreated to Villejuif.

Admiral Pothuau had at the same time advanced up the Seine with the Marine Infantry and the National Guard. A vedette at Gare-aux-Bœufs was surprised and taken prisoner, and Choisy-le-Roi was fired upon by field-guns, artillery, and some gunboats which appeared on the Seine. Meanwhile, as the Grenadiers of the 10th Regiment (German) were on the point of making an attack on their side, General Vinoy stopped the fighting.

This demonstration cost the French 1000 men

and 300 uninjured prisoners; the Prussians, who were under cover, lost only 140 men. Still, the forts kept up fire till mid-day, and then the enemy were allowed a short truce, in order to carry away their numerous wounded.

Against the centre of the Vth Corps also a strong force of infantry had advanced at eight o'clock, upon Garches and Malmaison, and had driven in part of the outposts. But they soon met with opposition from the battalions, and at noon retreated into Valérien.

THE ATTEMPT TO RELEASE THE ARMY OF PARIS. (November 30th and December 2nd.)

On November 30th the IInd Paris Army opened the battle which was to decide the fate of the capital.

To prevent the concentration of the Germans towards the real attack, the investing lines were engaged against sorties at almost every point.

General Ducrot ordered Susbielle's Division of his IInd Corps to march to the south. These had already reached Rosny by three o'clock in the morning, crossed over the Marne at Créteil by a flying bridge, and from thence, briskly supported by the neighbouring forts, opened fire on the

Wurtemburg Division, whose outposts had been pushed forward as far as Bonneuil and Mesly.

General von Obernitz had to maintain an extended position, his 1st Division, being near Villiers on the peninsula of Joinville, his 2nd at Sucy-en-Brie, and his 3rd at Brévannes. The division had been placed under the general in command of the Army of the Meuse, who had received orders from Versailles to increase his strength considerably by the addition of the XIIth Corps, or even of some troops of the Corps of Guards.

In consequence of the enemy's enormous numbers on Mont-Avron, the Saxon Corps believed themselves immediately threatened on the right bank of the Marne, and requested to be immediately transferred to the left; but the Crown Prince of Saxony gave orders that the whole of the 24th Division should assemble there on the following day.

Thus, for the present, no help could be rendered to the Wurtemburgers but by means of the wing of the IInd Corps, which was posted at Villeneuve, instead of the 7th Brigade of Infantry, which was sent near Brévannes to Valenton.

The fire of three German batteries, on their way to that town, first brought the advance of the French Division to a stand. The attempt of the Wurtemburgers to take Mont-Mesly completely failed at the outset; but after the artillery

was brought into play they succeeded in taking the hill by twelve o'clock, and the Prussian battalions made their way into Mesly. The Wurtemburg troopers attacked the enemy's retreating guns with great success. At 1.30 the reopening of the fire from the forts announced the end of this sortie. It cost the Germans 350 men, and the French 1200.

During this time the centre of the VIth Corps had not even been disturbed. General Vinoy, who had not been informed of the advance of Susbielle's Division, as soon as its retreat was noticed, opened a rapid fire on Ivry and the adjoining works, which was augmented by gunboats on the Seine, and armour-plated batteries on the railway. Then Admiral Pothuau advanced against Choisy-le-Roi and Thiais. He once more set his marines to drive out the Prussian outposts from Gare-aux-Bœufs. But the further advance failed, and General Vinoy recalled his troops, after which the fighting at Mesly ceased, and only the thunder of artillery continued till five o'clock.

After a preliminary cannonade from Valérien the Garde-Mobile advanced against the centre of the Vth Corps as early as seven o'clock. They were, however, repulsed by the outposts, and supports who were in readiness, and retired at eleven o'clock.

Further towards the north of Paris a sharp skirmish took place. At mid-day the Fort de la Briche, supported by field-guns and a floating battery, opened a heavy fire on the low-lying village of Epinay, on the right bank of the Seine. At two o'clock Haurion's Brigade advanced, two companies of marines pressed into this place along the bank of the river, and drove out the garrison, which consisted of only one company. A second also retired from the base of the fortifications in a northerly direction towards Ormesson. At three o'clock in the afternoon, the village, with a few obstinately defended farms on the further side of the mill-race, fell into the hands of the French.

Meanwhile the troops of the IVth Army Corps had assembled, and established seven batteries on the heights above. The infantry rushed into the village from all sides with loud cheers, and after a fierce street-fight recovered possession of the lost posts; and it was this transitory victory that was to raise such great hopes in Tours. The losses on both sides amounted to 300 men.

These were all mere feints to facilitate the chief action; and whilst the investing troops were thus engaged and attracted to various points, two Corps of the French IInd Army at 6.30 in the morning crossed the bridges at Joinville and Nogent which had been completed during the night. After

repulsing the German outposts they both deployed, and completely covered the peninsula between Champigny and Bry. The IIIrd Corps had taken the road along the north bank of the Marne, towards Neuilly, to cross the river there, thus at the same time threatening the position of the Saxon Corps, who therefore detained the 47th Brigade on the right bank, though it had been sent to the assistance of the Wurtemburgers. Consequently only two German brigades, spread over three-quarters of a mile, were left to face the two French Corps on the left bank, with the Saxon 48th at Noisy, and the Wurtemburg 1st between Villiers and Chennevières.

At ten o'clock Maussion's Division advanced towards the Park of Villiers. Supported by the Saxon divisions from Noisy, the Wurtemburgers repulsed a first attack, but in following it up met with heavy losses. The French batteries of two divisions and those of the Artillery Reserve formed line in front of the park. On their right wing Faron's Division, which had met with no slight losses, occupied Champigny, and was drawn up for defence in front of this position.

General Ducrot's original idea had been to prolong the engagement on the peninsula until he could be joined at Noisy by his IIIrd Corps. But as news arrived that at eleven o'clock they were

still beyond the Marne, he ordered a general attack by the two other Corps to commence at once.

On the left their advance was checked for a considerable time by the German batteries between Noisy and Villiers, and when Colonel von Abendroth advanced with six companies of the 48th Brigade from both those places to attack in force, the French retired to the vineyards on the western slope of the plateau, even leaving two guns, which, however, the Saxons could not take away for want of horses.

In the centre, Berthaut's Division tried to pass south of Villiers, but, under a fire from five batteries stationed there and at Cornilly, its ranks were so much thinned that it fell back before the advance of a Saxon battalion.

On the right wing, the guns which had been brought up for the defence of Champigny had at last been compelled by the German artillery to withdraw, and had again sought cover further north, near the lime-kilns. A division of infantry had advanced along the river to Maison-Blanche, but in the meantime the 2nd Wurtemburg Brigade, although itself attacked at Sucy, had despatched two companies and a battery to Chennevières as reinforcements. Moving forward from the Hunting-lodge, the Wurtemburgers took 200

French prisoners at Maison-Blanche; though, on the other hand, the attempt to scale the heights before Champigny with the companies assembled at Cornilly failed with heavy losses. However, on the renewal of the flank attack from the Hunting-lodge, Faron's Division, which had already been seriously shaken, was obliged to retreat to Champigny.

General Ducrot decided to be content, for that day, with having established a firm footing on the left bank of the Marne, and he brought up sixteen batteries to a position in his front, to secure the ground he had gained. On the following day the attack was to be renewed by all three Corps.

The Germans, on their part, had to congratulate themselves on having held firm against superior numbers. And so in the afternoon the fighting gradually died away, until it broke out again in the north.

The French IIIrd Corps, marching up the right bank of the Marne, had left a strong force in Neuilly, and had driven back the outpost of the Saxon 23rd Brigade. Under cover of six batteries the construction of two military bridges below Neuilly was begun at ten o'clock, and finished by noon. Just at this time it happened, as we have seen, that the French on the plateau

were retiring, so the passage did not take place until two o'clock in the afternoon. Bellemare's Division marched along the valley to Bry, where they joined the left wing of the IIIrd Corps. A regiment of Zouaves, trying to ascend the heights from that side, lost half its men and all its officers. Notwithstanding this, General Ducrot decided to bring his increased reinforcements to the renewal of the attack on Villiers.

Reinforced by four battalions, the divisions advanced in this direction, although the artillery had not succeeded in battering down the park wall; repeated onslaughts of infantry were repulsed, and finally the French retreated into the valley. Simultaneously with this, Berthaut's Division failed in an attack on the railway, and Faron's in one on the Hunting-lodge. Not till darkness had set in did the firing cease on both sides.

In the direction in which the French IIIrd Corps had been fighting in the morning, the Crown Prince of Saxony had collected the 23rd Division near Chelles; but as soon as the enemy's true plans could be known, he sent off a detachment of the 47th Brigade and part of the Artillery Corps to the threatened position held by the Wurtemburgers. In the same way General von Obernitz, as soon as the fighting at Mesly was over, despatched three battalions to the Hunting-

lodge. At night orders came from head-quarters for the IInd and VIth Corps to send reinforcements to the position where the investing lines were in danger, and the 7th and 21st Brigades arrived at Sucy on the following day, the 1st of December.

The attempt on the part of the French to break through without help from outside was already considered as fairly hopeless, and it was only the fear of popular indignation which caused the IIIrd Army to remain any longer on the left bank of the Marne. Instead of attacking, the French began to intrench themselves, and in order to clear the battlefield a truce was arranged. The thundering of the artillery of Mont-Avron must serve for the present to keep the Parisians in a good humour. The Germans also worked at strengthening their positions, but, suffering from the sudden and extreme cold, they withdrew at least part of their troops to quarters further to the rear.

The command of the whole of the German Army between the Marne and the Seine was handed over to General von Fransecky. The Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the Meuse had already arranged that Prince George, with all the available troops of the XIIth Corps, should take Bry and Champigny by surprise in the early morning.

With this object, on the morning of the 2nd of

December, the 24th Division assembled at Noisy, the 1st Wurtemburg Brigade at Villiers, and the 7th Prussian at the Hunting-lodge.

The foremost battalion of the Saxon Division drove back the enemy's outposts by an unexpected rush, took 100 prisoners, and after carrying a barricade, entered Bry. Here the fighting took the form of fierce action round the houses, in which the 2nd Battalion of the 107th Regiment lost nearly all its officers. Nevertheless, they held their ground, in spite of the heavy fire from the forts in the northern parts of the village.

The Wurtemburgers also seized Champigny, but soon met with fierce resistance from the enemy, who were sheltered in the buildings. Bois-de-la-Lande, previously occupied, had to be abandoned, and General Ducrot himself determined to attack. The strong lines of artillery on his front came into action at about nine o'clock, and two divisions deployed behind them.

Meanwhile, the battalion of Fusiliers of Colberg's Regiment marched once more from the Hunting-lodge on Bois-de-la-Lande, and took possession of it at the first onslaught. The French, who were firing steadily from the railway embankments, drove back the Pomeranians with clubbed rifles and at the point of the bayonet. A brisk fight was carried on at the same time near the lime-pits, where at

noon 160 French laid down their arms. Whilst the 6th Wurtemburger and the 9th Prussian batteries were by degrees brought into action against Champigny, General Hartmann succeeded in getting as far as the Bry road. As, however, the batteries were prevented by their own troops from firing, and were suffering, too, from the projectiles from the forts, they were withdrawn behind the slope of the valley near the Hunting-lodge. At two o'clock the 1st Wurtemburg and the 7th Prussian Brigades had established themselves in the line from the churchyard of Champigny to Bois-de-la-Lande.

Meanwhile, the French divisions, under Bellemare and Susbielle, had reached the battlefield from the right bank of the Marne. The two (German) battalions at Bry, having already lost thirty-six officers and 638 men, were compelled, on the approach of the enemy in very superior force, to evacuate the village and retire on Noisy, but not without taking 300 prisoners with them. The remainder of the Saxon forces held Villiers, where the batteries still available also took up a position.

When, at two o'clock, the French were leading a strong body of artillery to this point, four batteries of the IInd Corps rushed out of the hollow near the Hunting-lodge at full gallop, and opened fire at 2000 paces on their flank. In scarcely ten

minutes the French batteries retired and the Prussians went back to their sheltered position. Several of the enemy's battalions which, at about three o'clock, attempted a renewed assault on Villiers, were repulsed with less difficulty, and at five o'clock the fighting ceased. Only the French kept up a fire of field and fortress artillery until after dark.

General Ducrot had received information, in the course of the day, that the Army of the Loire was marching on Fontainebleau, and he therefore determined to maintain, if possible, his position outside Paris.

During the night of December 3rd, provisions had been procured, also additional teams and ammunition for the batteries; but the advance of support from without was by no means confirmed.

The troops were completely exhausted by the disastrous fighting they had gone through, and the Commander-in-Chief was justified in dreading a repulse on the Marne from the enemy's invigorated forces. He therefore ordered a retreat, the troops being informed that the attack should be renewed as soon as they were once more in a condition to fight.

Soon after midnight the divisions were already drawn up behind the outposts, and the baggage trains were sent back first. At noon the troops

were able to follow over the bridges at Neuilly, Bry, and Joinville. Only one brigade remained to protect the passage.

The retreat was very skilfully covered by a series of small attacks on the German outposts. The French batteries had opened fire at Le-Plant and Bry by daybreak, and the withdrawal of the enemy's army was completely hidden by the thick mist.

General Fransecky assembled the Saxon and the Wurtemburg Divisions in fighting order at Villiers and Cœuilly, the 7th Brigade with the artillery of the IInd Corps and two regiments of the VIth at Chennevières, intending to wait for the expected reinforcement of the 4th which was to come from the VIth Corps. The 23rd Division received orders from the Crown Prince of Saxony to cross to the left bank of the Marne, whilst the corps of Guards had in the meantime extended their outposts to Chelles.

Matters remained so on the 3rd, with the exception of petty frays, and at four o'clock in the afternoon the troops returned to quarters. But early on the 4th, as the patrols rode out towards Bry and Champigny, they found these places vacated, and the peninsula of Joinville deserted by the enemy.

The French IInd Army, which had been severely

reduced and its discipline much shaken, turned back to Paris; by their own statement they had lost 12,000 men. The Germans had lost 6200 men, but took up the position again that they had previously held in the investing lines.

This determined attempt on the part of General Ducrot is the most serious effort that was made to break out of Paris. It was directed towards what was at the moment the weakest point of the investment, but only met with good results at the commencement.[1]

THE ADVANCE OF THE IST ARMY IN NOVEMBER.

The newly-formed army in the north of France had not remained inactive. Rouen and Lille were its chief centres. In front of Lille, the Somme with its fortified passages at Ham, Péronne, Amiens and Abbeville afforded a field equally advantageous for attacks in front or for a secure retreat. The advance of the French in independent columns had, indeed, on various occasions, been

[1] A legend was subsequently circulated that the voice of one general at one of the German councils of war had, in opposition to all the others, prevented the removal of the chief head-quarters from Versailles. Apart from the fact that during the whole course of the invasion no council of war was ever held, it never occurred to any member of the King's military suite to set so bad an example to the army.

checked by detachments of the Army of the Meuse, and they were not strong enough to rid themselves permanently of that incubus.

We have already seen how, after the fall of Metz, the IInd Army retired towards the Loire, and the Ist into the northern departments of France.

A large portion of the Ist Army was detained as far back as the Moselle by the transport of the numerous prisoners and by the watch kept at the fortresses which interrupted the communications with Germany. The whole of the VIIth Corps were either in Metz or before Diedenhof and Montmédy. Of the Ist Corps, the 1st Division had been withdrawn to Rethel, the 4th Brigade had been carried forward by railway beyond Soissons to the investment of La-Fère, and the 3rd Division of Cavalry had been sent on towards the Forest of Argonnes. The remaining five brigades followed with the artillery on the 7th November.

Marching on a wide front, they had already reached the Oise, between Compiègne and Chauny, on the 20th. In front of the right wing the cavalry, supported by a battalion of Jägers, came across the Garde-Mobile at Ham and Guiscard, but the French forces retired to Amiens on the advance of the infantry columns. It was understood that

15,000 men were there, and reinforcements continually joining them.

On the 25th the 3rd Brigade reached Le-Quesnel. Of the VIIth Corps, the 15th Division succeeded in getting beyond Montdidier, and the 16th as far as Breteuil, whence they established communication with the Saxon forces at Clermont.

On the 26th the right wing started for Le-Quesnel, the left for Moreuil and Essertaux. The cavalry made incursions across the Somme, the right bank of which they found occupied by the French. The enemy's attitude showed that they restricted themselves to the defence of that position. General von Manteuffel thereupon determined to attack, without waiting for the arrival of the 1st Division, which had been inexplicably delayed on the way by railway from Rethel. He wanted first, on the 27th, to concentrate his available forces on a smaller front, as they were spread out over an extent of four miles, but the battle was unexpectedly fought on that same day.

BATTLE OF AMIENS.

(November 17th.)

General Farre, with his 17,500 men divided into three brigades, stood on one side of Amiens, on the south bank of the Somme, at Villers-Bretonneux,

and at Longueau, on the road to Péronne, keeping possession of the villages and the copses on his front. Besides these there were 8000 Gardes-Mobiles half a mile in front of the town in intrenched positions.

In accordance with the instructions from head-quarters, General von Goeben had arranged that the 15th Division should take up their quarters at Fouencamps and Sains on the 27th; the 16th at Rumigny and Plachy, and in the villages further back; the Artillery Corps at Grattepanche. The VIIIth Corps had to assemble before Amiens between the Celle and the Noye, standing at least half a mile from the Ist Corps, and divided from them by the Noye and the Avre. General von Bentheim, on the other side, had directed his advanced guard, the 3rd Brigade, to find quarters north of the Luce.

At an early hour the Germans seized the fords of the stream at Démuin, Hangard, and Domart. At ten o'clock they moved forward in order to occupy the quarters intended for them, and as the enemy were already in possession, a fight began which gradually increased in magnitude.

The wooded heights on the north bank of the Luce were taken without any particular resistance, and maintained in spite of several assaults by the French. The artillery advanced in the intervals.

On the left the 4th Regiment seized the village of Gentelles, on the right the 44th Regiment rushed up to within 300 paces of the left wing of the French position, and by a vigorous onslaught carried by storm the earthworks at the railway-cutting east of Villers-Bretonneux. Soon after mid-day a strong force of the enemy drew up at Bretonneux and in Cachy, directly opposite the 3rd Brigade, which was extended nearly a mile.

On the left wing of the Germans the 16th Division had by eleven o'clock already reached the quarters assigned to them, and had driven the enemy out of Hébecourt, as well as out of the woods north of this place towards Dury. When the VIIIth Corps was called out on the left bank of the Noye, the 15th Division was moved from Moreuil along the left bank of the Noye by way of Ailly to Dommartin, and the advanced guard from Hailles marched on Fouencamps.

Thus it happened that before noon, between the two Corps, the roads from Roye and Mondidier were left completely exposed on the German side, while a French brigade was standing at the fork of the road at Longueau, though, in fact, it remained absolutely inactive.

This interval was at first screened only by the numerous retinue and the staff of the Commander-

in-Chief; and then it was to some extent filled up by the battalions constituting the escort of the head-quarters. As, however, at ten o'clock the French on their side commenced an attack on the 3rd Brigade, General von Manteuffel ordered the 15th Division to join in the fight as far as possible on the right wing.

After a steady defence, the companies of the 4th Regiment were driven back out of the Wood of Hangard towards the slope of the hill in front of Démuin, and subsequently, after having fired away all their ammunition, the defenders of Gentelles were driven back to Domart.

General von Strubberg, instructed from the camp beyond the Luce, had sent four batteries in this direction, which crossed the Avre, but came under such a heavy fire from the Wood of Gentelles that their further advance was prevented, and they had to change front on the copse. Behind them, however, the other detachments of the 30th Brigade pressed forward to St.-Nicolas on the right bank, and to Boves on the left, and with the help of the 29th Brigade drove out the French from the heap of ruins.

Meanwhile a part of the 1st German Division, which was retiring, had come up behind the 3rd Brigade. The position of the artillery was considerably strengthened, and the guns were directed

against the earthworks south of Bretonneux. As further support the Crown Prince's Regiment marched out, and the French were again soon driven out of the Bois-de-Hangard. The East Prussians, who were following, crouched behind the earthworks; several detachments of the 4th and 44th Regiments gradually collected there from the neighbouring woods, and drove the enemy from this position. Thirteen batteries now silenced the French artillery, and, after they had fired for some time on Bretonneux, the place was, at four o'clock, seized by the Prussians, who came in from all sides with drums beating. The French in the town only opposed them at a few places; for the most part they hurried over the Somme at Corbie under cover of the darkness, and with the loss of 180 unwounded prisoners.

When, somewhat later, General Lecointe advanced with the reserve brigade on Domart, he found the place already in possession of the 1st Division, so turned back. The French only succeeded in holding Cachy till late in the evening.

The troops of the Ist Corps were accommodated for the night in the hamlets to the south of the Luce; the outposts remained on duty on the north bank, and Bretonneux also was occupied.

On the left wing of the battle-field the 16th Division had advanced on Dury, had driven

the French out of the neighbouring churchyard, but had been forced to retire from an attack on the enemy's lines of intrenchment, which were extensive and strongly defended. They bivouacked behind Dury.

It was night before General von Manteuffel received news of the enemy's complete defeat. Early in the morning of the 28th the patrols of the Ist Army Corps found the ground clear of the enemy as far as the Somme, and all the bridges across the river demolished. By noon General von Goeben returned to Amiens, and the citadel capitulated two days later with 400 men and 30 cannon.

One peculiarity of the battle of the 27th November is the small extent of the battle-field in proportion to the number of the troops engaged. General Farre, with 25,000 men in round numbers, covered a front of three miles from Pont-de-Metz, south of Amiens, to the east of Villers-Bretonneux, with the Somme close on his rear. As the Germans attacked on about the same length of front, there was a break in their centre. The danger caused by this gap was not taken advantage of during the morning through the inactivity of the enemy, and it was then nullified by the occupation of St.-Nicolas.

The superiority of numbers was on the side of

the Germans; for, although of the 1st Division in their rear, only the Crown Prince's Regiment could take part in the fighting, they were 30,000 strong. The 3rd Brigade had borne the brunt of the battle, losing 630 men and 34 officers, out of a total of 1300. The French also lost 1300 killed, besides 1000 reported missing. Part of the National Guard threw down their arms and fled for their homes. The main body of the French Corps retired on Amiens.

Immediately after the battle the Ist Army was reinforced by the 4th Brigade, which had been brought from La-Fère.

THE TAKING OF LA-FÈRE.

(November 27th.)

This little fortress had become quite important, since it closed the line of railway passing through Rheims, whether to Paris or to Amiens. Lying in low open ground, well watered by the Somme and its tributaries, it is difficult of access; otherwise, the fortifications were restricted to a wall standing apart, with small earthworks lying close in front of it, and it was entirely exposed to view from the heights situated on the east at a distance of not more than 1500 metres.

The brigade had temporarily invested La-Fère on the 15th November, and when the siege-train arrived from Soissons with thirty-two heavy guns, seven batteries were constructed and armed during the night of the 25th on the heights already mentioned. On the following morning these opened fire, and on the 27th the place capitulated. 2300 Gardes-Mobiles were taken prisoners, and the most serviceable of the 113 guns were carried to Amiens to arm the citadel. The VIIth Corps, which was to have supported the Ist Army, meanwhile never appeared in sight, because they still had further work to do on the Moselle; on the 13th November the greater part of the 14th Division had only reached Diedenhof.

The Taking of Diedenhof.

(November 24th.)

This fortress, being shut in on all sides by hills, was entirely without bomb-proof space; the direct approach from the south was, on the other hand, rendered more difficult by inundations, and on the west and north by marsh-lands. General von Kameke therefore decided to await the results of a heavy bombardment before making a regular attack. Batteries were erected on both banks of the

Moselle, and on the morning of the 22nd eighty-five guns opened fire. At first the fortress answered briskly. In the following night, to lay the first parallel, the infantry advanced to within 600 paces on the west front, but, in consequence of pouring rain and the condition of the ground, the work made but small progress. However, on the 24th at mid-day the commandant sent in negotiations for the surrender of the place. The garrison, 4000 men strong, with the exception of the National Guard stationed in the place, was captured and sent to Germany; and 199 guns, besides a considerable amount of provisions, arms and ammunition, fell into the hands of the victorious troops.

The 14th Division was now required to lay siege to the forts on the northern frontier, which would occupy it for some time. The 13th Division was, by orders from head-quarters, directed to commence operations in the south of France.

THE INVESTMENT OF BELFORT IN NOVEMBER.

On the south-east of the seat of war Belfort had become the centre of continuous small engagements between French scouts and the rear of the XIVth Corps, which, under General von Werder, stood near Vesoul.

However, when the Divisions which up till then

had been standing before Strasburg had been relieved by a new contingent from Germany, the troops that were at Neu-Breisach were available, and these forces marched in the direction of Upper Alsace; while the 1st Reserve Division had reached Belfort by the 3rd November, and by the 8th had effected the preliminary investment of that place. The larger half of the 4th Reserve Division had marched to combine with the XIVth Corps at Vesoul, a detachment under General von Debschitz occupied Montbéliard, and the 67th Regiment held Mulhouse and Delle.

If we glance back at the German successes during November and the general military position towards the end of the month, we see the grand sortie from Paris repulsed in the north, the danger of being hemmed in done away with by General von Manteuffel's victory at Amiens; in the east, Diedenhof, Breisach, Verdun and La-Fère taken, Montmédy and Belfort surrounded; and in the south Prince Frederick Charles preparing to attack the French army at Orleans.

BATTLE OF ORLEANS.

(December 3rd and 4th.)

When the telegraphic order was received by the IInd Army, soon after noon on the 2nd of

December, the Prince on the same day assembled the Xth Corps at Beaune-la-Rolande and Boynes, the IIIrd at Pithiviers, and the IXth at Bazoches-les-Gallerandes. By evening the collected forces had their marching orders.

The attack was expected to take place two days later. The IIIrd Corps was first to advance on Loury by way of Chilleurs-aux-Bois; the Xth only on Chilleurs; the IXth, however, were to attack Artenay at half-past nine. The 1st Division of Cavalry, supported by the infantry on the left wing, was to keep a look-out over the Yonne; the 6th was to follow the right wing. The Grand Duke, to whom it had been left to plan his own march on the west of the road to Paris, ordered the 22nd Division to assist in the attack on Artenay, the Bavarian Corps to advance on Lumeau, the 17th Division to remain at Anneux. The 4th Division of Cavalry was to scour the country on the left flank.

Already by nine o'clock in the morning on the 3rd of December the IIIrd Corps met eight battalions and six batteries of the French at Santeau. The 12th Brigade and the artillery of the 6th Division, which had been marched up in the rear of the foremost battalions in the column of route, therefore formed line at La-Brosse. After a few rounds, one of the batteries of the left wing

had to be withdrawn from the battle, which had now commenced ; on the right, on the contrary, the Artillery Corps came up by degrees, and by noon seventy-eight Prussian guns were in full action.

The French, yielding to such superior strength, retired on Chilleurs; but, after the German batteries had advanced within 2000 paces of that place, and their right flank had been threatened by an assault from the Jäger battalions, they commenced a retreat towards the forest, and at three o'clock part of the 5th Division followed them up by the path which led to the south, and the 6th by the high-roads. As these had been obstructed in several places, it was six o'clock in the evening before the clearing by Loury was reached.

On the right, brisk musketry-fire was heard in the direction of Neuville, and an announcement also arrived that on the left the French were occupying Nancray.

In consequence of this, some of the reserve forces that had remained at Chilleurs were brought up as a support; one regiment was fronted towards the west, a second towards the east, and, under cover of the outposts on the south, the remainder of the troops bivouacked and went into quarters at Loury.

The IXth Corps had at first assembled at Château-Gaillard, on the road to Paris, and then

advanced along the high-road and against Villereau by way of Dambron.

'At Assas they met the French, who were soon driven back by the guns, and vanished towards Artenay. At about ten o'clock an obstinate duel was opened with the batteries of the 2nd Division (French) in position at this place, in which part of the Corps' artillery bore a part, seconded presently by the batteries of the 22nd Division, which had come up to Poupry. General Martineau slowly retreated in echelon before the overwhelming fire of ninety guns, the artillery leading the way, on La-Croix-Briquet and Ferme-d'Arblay. By twelve o'clock the Germans were in possession of Artenay, and after half an hour's rest they renewed the attack. It was a long and obstinate duel of artillery and infantry alike, while the 22nd Division pushed hard on the French left flank. At two o'clock their guns were silenced, the left wing column of the IXth German Corps took the farm of Arblay, and the centre drove the enemy down the high-road, fighting persistently, past La-Croix-Briquet to Andeglou, where, under cover of the marine ordnance, resistance was kept up till dark.

General Puttkamer had brought up five batteries to within 800 paces of Chevilly, and the 22nd Division was advancing on the burning village, when the general in command gave the order to

halt, the Grand Duke doubting the wisdom of a night attack on an intrenched position. But when, soon after, a patrol of Hussars announced that it was already evacuated, General von Wittich ordered his men to take possession.

The troops bivouacked, under a heavy snow-storm, in and to the rear of La-Croix-Briquet.

At the first advance the IXth Corps had sent a detachment of four battalions of Hessians against St.-Lyé on the left. They had met the enemy at La-Tour, and had driven him back on St.-Germain, but could not drive him out again.

When the Xth Corps, marching round by Pithiviers, reached Chilleurs at about three o'clock, in the rear of the IIIrd Corps, part of the 20th Division went on in the direction of the battle at Neuville, which, in the evening, became audible at Loury. Darkness had already come on and precluded the use of artillery, but the infantry broke into the village at several points. However, they found the streets barricaded, and met with obstinate resistance, so the attack had to be postponed till the following day.

The XVth French Corps had alone received the onslaught of three Prussian Corps. Strong contingents of the Army of the Loire, posted to the right and left of the XVth Corps, made but feeble efforts throughout the day to support it. General

Chanzy alone, at about two o'clock, ordered the 2nd Division of the XVIth Corps to advance when he heard firing from Artenay, though he had that morning begun his retreat on St. Péravy and Boulay. But this reinforcement met the Prussian 17th Division, which, coming up from Anneux, was on the point of joining in the fight at Andeglou, and with it the Bavarian Corps advancing from Lumeau. Their strong artillery, in position at Chameul and Sougy, soon forced the French to retire. First Douzy and then Huêtre were taken, and the château of Chevilly occupied by the 17th Division. Here too darkness put an end to the fighting. The troops of the right wing encamped at Provenchères, Chameul and other places to the rear.

Thus the German army had made its way without much fighting to within two miles of Orleans. The French, indeed, had maintained their ground till evening in the neighbourhood of Neuville, but the detachments stationed there were ordered to retire in the course of the night. They were to get into the Pithiviers road by Rebréchien, and make a circuit by Orleans to Chevilly. But they thus came under the fire of the IIIrd German Corps, encamped at Loury, and fled in disorder back into the wood, whence they attempted to reach their destination in detachments.

It was only to be expected that the French would stoutly defend their intrenchments at Gidy and Cer-

cottes, on the following day, if only to keep open their retreat on Orleans. On the 4th, therefore, Prince Frederick Charles ordered the Grand Duke's forces and the IXth Corps to attack both points from all sides. The IIIrd Corps was to advance from Loury on Orleans, and the Xth, again forming the reserve, was to follow on Chevilly.

General d'Aurelle had returned in the evening to Saran. Here he saw the 2nd Division of the XVth flying past in complete rout, and heard that the 1st too had failed to make a stand at Chilleurs. The Corps of the right wing were altogether shattered by the battle of Beaune, and those of the left no less by the fight at Loigny. The French General saw the danger of being driven on the Loire, with undisciplined hordes, and thus blocking the only passage across the river at Orleans. He decided therefore on a divergent retreat. Only the XVth Corps was to retire by Orleans; General Crouzat was to cross the Loire at Gien, General Chanzy at Beaugency. Then their reunion must be attempted beyond the Sauldre. The necessary dispositions were made during the night, and communicated to the Government. From the Green Table at Tours, indeed, counter orders came next morning, to maintain the position at Orleans, which was, in fact, already given up; but the General adhered to his own determination.

On December 4th the IIIrd Army Corps (German) marched out of Loury in two columns, one by the high road and one by Vennecy. Both reached Boigny by noon, having met none but deserters.

A detachment was sent on to Neuville on the right, and captured seven deserted guns and stands of arms. To the left, another detachment occupied Chézy, on the Loire. After a short rest the main columns advanced, and by two o'clock the 6th Division reached Vaumainbert, which was occupied by part of the French XVth Corps. Although the country was not open enough to allow of the employment of artillery, the place was taken by the Brandenburgers, in spite of the stout resistance of the French Marine Infantry, and the fire of the batteries on the heights to the north of St.-Loup could now be directed on that suburb of Orleans.

The 5th Division had meanwhile come up behind the 6th and taken part in the fight.

The XXth French Corps, which was still at Chambon, in the eastern part of the forest opposite Beaune-la-Rolande, had received orders at four in the morning, from Tours direct, to march on Orleans. Contradictory orders had previously arrived from General d'Aurelle, but nothing further had been heard. General Crouzat had, as a precaution, sent his train across the Loire at Jargeau, and then marched in the direction he was ordered to take.

When, at half-past two, at Pont-aux-Moines, he met the detachment marching on Chézy, he determined to fight his way across; but as General von Stülpnagel reinforced his two battalions by bringing up the rest of his Division, the French gave up the attempt and withdrew to the other side of the river, crossing again at Jargeau.

On the German side the attack on St.-Loup was unsuccessful; and since from the site of the battle he got no news of the other Corps, and darkness was coming on, General von Alvensleben postponed any further attack on the city till the following day.

To the north of Orleans the IXth Army Corps (German) had advanced from La-Croix-Briquet on the intrenched position of Cercottes. At about one o'clock the foremost detachments of infantry entered the place. The 2nd Division of the French XVth Corps was driven by the fire of the artillery into the vineyards outside the town. Here the infantry alone could continue the struggle. The French defended every tenable spot, and in the railway station just outside Orleans especially held their own with great persistency. The station and the deep cutting through which the road ran were fortified with barricades and rifle-pits, and armed with naval guns. It was not till nightfall, at about half-past five, that they abandoned this position, but renewed the contest a little further back.

To avoid street-fighting in the dark, General von Manstein put a stop to the battle at about seven o'clock, till next day.

The advanced guard of the 17th Division of the Grand Duke's forces had found Gidy intrenched and strongly occupied. But at the approach of the IXth Corps the French abandoned the position at about eleven o'clock, leaving 8 guns behind them. The German Division, to avoid the wood, now marched to the west, on Boulay, whither the 22nd and the 2nd Cavalry Division followed as a reserve.

They here found the Bavarian Corps and the 4th Cavalry Division engaged in a fight, having already driven the French out of Bricy and Janvry. When the artillery had for some time been engaged General von der Tann stormed the position, at about twelve o'clock. But the French did not wait for this; they beat a hasty retreat, leaving some of their guns in the trenches. The 2nd Cavalry Division followed in pursuit.

The 4th Hussars, of the 5th Brigade, galloping past Montaigu, charged a French unlimbered battery and seized all the guns; another at Ormes was brought out of action by a horse battery. From thence a strong body of French horse suddenly appeared on the left flank of the 4th Brigade as these were crossing the road to Châteaudun. But Blucher's Hussars, with a sharp swerve,

drove the enemy through the village and back on Ingré.

The 4th Cavalry Division was placed to watch on the Grand Duke's right flank; and the Hussars here charged 250 men of the 2nd Life Guards, forming the escort of a baggage-train on the road to Châteaudun, and took them all prisoners.

While the Germans were thus converging on Orleans from the north and east, the French XVIIth Corps and the 1st Division of the XVIth were still in the field at Patay and St. Péravy. General Chanzy had assembled the latter at Coinces, and, to protect himself against their threatened attack in flank, General von der Tann drew up his 3rd Infantry Brigade, with the Cuirassiers and artillery reserve, on a front towards Bricy. The 4th Cavalry Division marched on Coinces, where General von Bernhardi, leaping a wide ditch, with four squadrons of Uhlans, drove a body of French horse back on St. Péravy without their stopping to do more than fire one volley. Other squadrons of the 9th Brigade charged the French tirailleurs, and pursued the cavalry till they had fallen back on a strong body of infantry. The 8th Brigade was observing Patay, and after that place had come under the fire of a battery and been abandoned, General Chanzy gave up all further attack and retired behind the wood of Montpipeau.

The 2nd Cavalry Division now made for the Loire immediately below Orleans. Its artillery destroyed a bridge at Chapelle over which a baggage-train was passing, and compelled the troops which were marching on Cléry, along the further bank, to fly back to Orleans. Two military railway-trains from thence were not to be stopped by the firing, but one from Tours, in which, as it happened, was Gambetta himself, returned thither with all speed.

The Bavarian Corps, meanwhile, had advanced on the high road, and the 22nd Division, in touch with the IXth Corps, on the old Châteaudun road; the 17th Division on La-Borde between the other two. This Division was called upon at about 3.30 to take the village of Heurdy, which was stoutly defended; and when the Bavarians from Ormes had turned to the right on Indré, it proceeded by the high road towards St.-Jean-de-la-Ruelle. Having overcome all opposition there too, the head of the Division reached the gates of Orleans at about six o'clock.

General von Tresckow there negociated with the military authorities the formal occupation of the town. An agreement was arrived at by ten o'clock, and shortly after midnight the Grand Duke marched in with the 17th Division followed by the 2nd Bavarian Brigade.

The bridge over the Loire was forthwith secured

the French not having had time to blow it up. The rest of the troops found quarters to the west and north of the city.

The peremptory orders from the Government to hold Orleans had shaken General d'Aurelle's original determination. When the greater part of the XVth Corps (French) arrived there in the forenoon, he wanted to renew the attempt at resistance. But the necessary orders could not be transmitted to the Corps on the right wing, nor carried out by those on the left; and by five o'clock the General in command was convinced of the futility of any further conflict. The artillery of the XVth Corps was first transferred to La-Ferté-St.-Aubin; the infantry followed. The XXth Corps, as we have seen, was at Jargeau; the XVIIIth had recrossed the Loire at Sully; the XVIth and XVIIth moved off westward in the direction of Beaugency, but remained on the right bank of the river.

The battle, which had lasted two days, had cost the Germans 1700 men; the French lost 20,000, of whom 1800 were taken prisoners. Their large army, lately massed before Orleans, was now split up into three separate bodies.

THE GERMAN ADVANCE ON THE SOUTH, EAST, AND WEST.

The troops were too much exhausted for immediate pursuit in any direction.

It was decided that the 6th Cavalry Division, reinforced by an infantry detachment of the 18th Division, should follow up the enemy to the southward only, ascertain his whereabouts, and destroy the connection of the railways from Bourges, Orleans and Tours at the Vierzon junction. These Cavalry troops were in quarters to the north of the city; the French XVth had a long start of them, and their main body had reached Salbris, when, two days after the battle, on December 6th, General von Schmidt arrived by a forced march at La-Ferté-St.-Aubin. Here he found a detachment of the 18th Division, which had already driven the French rear-guard back on La-Motte-Beuvron and was now ordered to retire on the Loiret. Only two companies of the 36th Regiment and one of Pioneers joined the advance, and followed the cavalry partly in baggage-waggons and on gun-limbers.

On the 7th, under orders from Tours, the French left the high road and executed a flank movement of four miles in an easterly direction to Aubigny-Ville. The cavalry, supported to the best of their power by their artillery and the small infantry force, had a smart fight with the French rear-guard at Nouan-le-Fuzelier, and again in the evening at Salbris, in which the French finally had the best of it. The neighbourhood being very thinly populated, the Division had to get back in the dark

to Nouan, to find shelter from the bitter winter night.

Long before daybreak on the 8th, the French rear-guard had left Salbris to avoid a further encounter with the enemy, whose strength they greatly over-estimated.

After some slight skirmishes the Cavalry Division reached Vierzon that evening. The telegraph wires were cut and the railway line torn up in several places, 70 goods' vans were armour-plated, the direction of the enemy's retreat reported, and any offensive movement on the part of the French from that side was regarded as most improbable.

The Division had fulfilled its task; it was now ordered to leave one brigade as a corps of observation, and to advance on Blois with the rest. General von der Groeben maintained his positions at Vierzon and Salbris till the 14th.

The winter campaign of this 6th Cavalry Division was exceptionally fatiguing. It was almost impossible to move excepting along the high roads, and they were frozen so hard that it was often necessary to dismount and lead the horses. The inhabitants of the Sologne district were extremely hostile, the advanced troopers were shot down in every village. The French forces, on the other hand, made but a feeble resistance. Numerous prisoners and large quantities of abandoned matériel bore

witness to a hasty retreat, in many cases to desperate flight. Nevertheless, in spite of much purposeless marching and counter-marching, the Corps of the right wing had by December 13th succeeded in joining the Army of Orleans at Bourges.

The state in which they arrived may be gathered from the telegraphic *Correspondence Urgente* of the Government with General Bourbaki, who, when General d'Aurelle was deprived of the command in chief, took that of these three Corps.

Monsieur Freycinet, who was no doubt kept well informed by the country people, assured General Bourbaki that only a weak force of cavalry stood in front of him, and repeatedly urged his advancing on Blois. The General replied that if he were to make the attempt, not a gun, not a man of his three Corps would ever be seen again. His intention was to retreat at once from Bourges on St.-Amand, and if necessary yet further to the rear; the only danger was that he might be attacked before he could accomplish this, and be involved in disaster.

The Minister of War himself went to Bourges, but he too renounced all idea of an offensive movement when he saw the disorder of the troops. "*C'est encore ce que j'ai vu de plus triste.*" It was with great difficulty that he persuaded the Corps not to retreat at once, but to await the

course of events, under cover of a detachment pushed forward on Vierzon.

On the day when General Schmidt entered Vierzon, the XVth Corps was in the neighbourhood of Henrichemont, at about an equal distance with himself from Bourges. The XVIIIth and XXth Corps were at Aubigny-Ville and Cernay, from two to three marches away.

It can scarcely be doubted that, if the 18th Division had followed the advance of the 6th Cavalry Division, the Germans might have taken possession of Bourges and of the vast military stores there.

To the east of Orleans the IIIrd Corps had marched up the river on Châteauneuf. They only met parties of stragglers till the 7th, when two Divisions of the XVIIIth French Corps attempted to cross to the right bank of the Loire at Gien. This resulted in an engagement between the advanced guards at Nevoy, with the result that these Divisions retreated across the bridge in the course of the night and continued their march on Bourges.

THE GRAND DUKE'S BATTLE.

(December 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th.)

The Grand Duke's forces were in a position close to the retreating left wing of the French. In

contrast to the disorder of the right wing, General Chanzy, certainly the most capable of all the leaders whose duty it became to fight the invaders in the open field, had, in a great measure, restored the discipline and spirit of his troops. They were not only able to make a stand, but could even attack the enemy. They had, indeed, been considerably reinforced by the newly formed XXIst Corps and by Camô's Division. The latter formed the advanced guard at Meung; behind it were the XVIth Corps at Beaugency, the XVIIth at Cravant, and the XXIst at St.-Laurent by the woods of Marchénoir.

On the day after the fight the Grand Duke gave the troops a day's rest; only the cavalry pursued the French. The 4th Cavalry Division reached Ouzouer; the 2nd, arriving at Meung, met a strong force of infantry.

On the 7th, the Grand Duke's forces advanced on a very wide front. The 17th Division, on the left wing, marched on Meung, where its artillery opened a duel with that of the enemy. Towards four o'clock, a Mecklenburg battalion carried Langlochère by storm, but found itself threatened on both sides by the approach of the enemy's columns. On the left Foinard was ere long taken and a gun seized, while on the right the 1st Bavarian Brigade advanced on La Bourie. Here, almost at the same moment, the 2nd Cavalry

Division came up by by-roads from Renardière, having driven the enemy out of Le-Bardon by the fire of its guns. The Bavarians now marched out to meet the mass of French approaching from Grand-Chatre. They fought a hard battle till nightfall, supported by the horse batteries, ending in the retreat of the French on Beaumont.

During this conflict of the left wing, the Grand Duke's Army, the 1st Bavarian Division, had marched a considerable distance on Baccon, and the 22nd on Ouzouer; and then, finding the French offered a determined resistance, the Grand Duke decided on closing up his forces to the left.

December 8th.—To this end the 22nd Division advanced to the south of Ouzouer on Villermain. After repulsing the swarms of tirailleurs which attacked their left flank under cover of a fog, General von Wittich directed his march on Cravant, to effect a junction with the right wing of Bavarians who were already engaged in a hot struggle. They had repulsed the enemy's advance from Villechaumont and had advanced with the 2nd Division along the road from Cravant to Beaugency; when all three French Divisions charged afresh, the Bavarians retreated on Beaumont. Here they found support from the former and 17 batteries, which were gradually brought into the fighting line. Their fire and an impetuous attack from three Bavarian brigades at last forced the

enemy to fall back, and the position in the high road was recovered.

The French now, on their side, brought up a strong body of artillery, and the XVIIth Corps prepared to advance on Cravant. But the 22nd German Division had already arrived there at about one o'clock, after taking Beauvert and Layes, with the 4th Cavalry Division on their right and the 2nd on their left. So when, at about three o'clock, the dense French columns advanced on Cravant, they were checked by an impetuous attack of the 44th Brigade, which had joined the Bavarians, and soon driven out of Layes, which they had taken on their way. The five batteries nearest to Cravant had suffered so severely meanwhile that they had to be withdrawn.

When at last, at about four o'clock, the Bavarian battalions advanced to storm the height in front of them, they were met by fresh troops of the enemy, and after losing the greater part of their officers were compelled to retreat on the artillery position at Beaumont. Finally, however, the French abandoned Villechaumont.

On the left wing of the Grand Duke's forces the 17th Division had pursued the retreating French beyond Vallées and Villeneuve, and then at about half-past twelve had attacked them at Messas. The defence was obstinate, and it was not till dusk

that they succeeded in carrying the place. The artillery directed its fire on dense masses assembled by Vernon, the infantry stormed the hill of Beaugency, and finally forced their way into the town, where a French battery fell into their hands. Camô's Division then retired on Tavers, and even after midnight General von Tresckow attacked Vernon, whence the French, taken quite by surprise, fled to Bonvalet.

The Commander-in-Chief of the IInd Army (German) had intended to march the IIIrd, Xth, and IXth Corps on Bourges, from Gien, Orleans, and lastly from Blois. But the Grand Duke's force in its advance on Blois by the right bank of the Loire had met with unexpected resistance and a two days' engagement. At the army head-quarters at Versailles it was regarded as indispensable that the Grand Duke should immediately be reinforced by at least one Division. Telegraphic orders to that effect were despatched at ten in the morning of December 9th, The IXth Corps, which was already on the march along the left bank and had no enemy in front, could not give the required support, as all the bridges over the river had been blown up. The IIIrd Corps was therefore ordered to leave only a detachment at Gien, as a corps of observation, and to march back on Orleans. The Xth Corps was to call in the detachments it had posted to the east

of the city and advance on Meung. Thus, on the 9th, the Grand Duke was still actually facing eleven French Divisions with four Divisions of infantry, quite unsupported. Early next morning General Chanzy proceeded to the attack.

December 9th.—The two Prussian Divisions at Beauvert and Messas stood firmly awaiting the French charge. The two Bavarian Divisions, having sustained great loss, were left at Cravant as a reserve, but soon had to be absorbed in the fighting line, when at seven o'clock strong columns of the French were seen advancing on Le Mée.

Dense bodies of tirailleurs were repulsed both there and at Vernon, and came under the fire of the devoted German artillery, which silenced the French guns and then opened fire on Villorceau. In spite of a stout defence, this village was taken by about half-past ten by the Bavarian infantry. The French advance on Villechaumont in greatly superior force was also repulsed, with the assistance of three battalions and two batteries of the 22nd Division. The Thuringians then stormed Cernay, where 200 French laid down their arms, and one of their batteries lost its team and carriages.

On the right wing, by a misunderstanding, the Germans evacuated Layes and Beauvert, and the French marched in. However, with the support of the 2nd Bavarian Brigade, the enemy was again

driven out of both places. Further to the north, the 4th Cavalry Division was observing the movement of a French detachment marching on Villermain.

The French made renewed efforts by midday, advancing again on Cravant in strong columns; but this movement General Tresckow attacked in flank, from Messas. He left only a weak detachment in Beaugency and secured the villages on the left on the way to Tavers. The main body of the 17th Division advanced on Bonvalet, reinforced the hardly-pressed Bavarians in Villorceau, and occupied Villemarceau in front of that place. Here the Division had to maintain a severe struggle, at about three o'clock, with the strong columns of the French XVIth and XVIIth Corps. The infantry rushing on the enemy with cheers succeeded, however, in repulsing him and holding their ground in spite of a hot fire. At the same time three Bavarian battalions, with cavalry and artillery, had marched up from Cravant and had driven the French out of Villejouan. Further to the right a battalion of the 32nd had taken possession of Ourcelle. A line from thence to Tavers marked the ground so laboriously wrung from the French.

The battle ended with the retreat of the enemy on Josnes and Dugny.

On this day the IIIrd Corps were on the march

to Orleans. The IXth could only take no part in the fighting but by the fire from their artillery on Meung and Beaugency, from its position on the left bank. It was not till near Blois that they met some French detachments. Fifty men of one of the Hessian battalions stormed the fortified castle of Chambord a little way from the river, and there took 200 prisoners and twelve ammunition waggons with their teams.

Of the Xth Corps only the infantry at the head had reached Meung, but it had sent forward a regiment of Hussars with eight batteries, which arrived at Grand Chatre by about three o'clock in the afternoon.

The Commander-in-Chief of the IInd Army now ordered the Bavarian Corps to retire on Orleans, to recruit after its heavy losses. But even when reinforced by the Xth Corps the Grand Duke still had to meet an enemy of double numerical strength, and instead of pursuing he had rather to think of defending his position.

December 10th.—Before daybreak General Chanzy renewed his attack, which even the Bavarians were presently required to repel.

At seven in the morning the French XVIIth Corps rushed in dense masses on Origny, took 150 prisoners, and forced their way into Villejouan. This advance was met by the 43rd Brigade

at Cernay on the front, and by the 4th Bavarians with six batteries at Villechaumont; while on the right flank General von Tresckow marched on Villorceau and Villemarceau. In this last village two of his battalions, supported by four batteries, resisted every onslaught of the French from Origny and Toupenay. At noon the main body of the 17th Division advanced to repossess themselves of Villejouan. Here the French made an obstinate stand. The fighting, with great loss on both sides, was continued till four o'clock, and then fresh troops of French came up to recover the position the Germans still held in one single farmstead.

All the artillery of the Prussian Division had, however, deployed to the south of Villemarceau; they were joined by two horse batteries of the Xth Corps, and the batteries of the 22nd Division also opened an effective fire. The concentric fire of all these guns put an end to any further attack of the XVIIth French Corps.

Beaugency was now occupied by part of the Xth Corps. During the past few days the German left wing had had a firm position on the Loire to depend upon, but on the right such a point had been wholly lacking. The French had nevertheless made no attempt to take advantage of their superiority by extending their front. Not till this day did they march on the unprotected German

flank. The greater part of the XXIst Corps was deployed opposite to it, between Poisly and Mézicrès, and at half-past ten the strong columns advanced on Villermain. The Bavarians were compelled to form in a bow-line, with the 2nd Brigade, from Jouy to Coudray. Seven batteries were brought into that line, and on its right wing the 4th Cavalry Division stood in readiness. Before two o'clock 2 more horse batteries and 4 batteries of the Xth Corps arrived from Cravant, and joined them there with three brigades as a reserve. The fire of over a hundred German guns made the French take their artillery out of action at about three o'clock, and separate weak attacks by their infantry were repulsed without difficulty by the Germans, who awaited them in resolute defence.

The French losses in this four days' battle are unknown. The Grand Duke's force lost 3400 men, of which the larger half belonged to the two Bavarian Divisions.

The Grand Duke had held his own against three corps of the enemy, till the first supports could come up, and this he owed to the bravery of his troops, more especially of the artillery. This alone lost 255 men and 356 horses. The guns were brought into such requisition that at last almost all the steel guns of the light batteries of the 22nd

Division, and most of the Bavarian, were rendered useless by the burning out of their breech blocks.

The IIIrd Corps had on this day just arrived at St.-Denis, and the IXth at Vienne opposite Blois; but here too the bridge over the Loire was blown up.

On the French side, General Chanzy had learnt from the telegraphic correspondence of General Bourbaki with the Government at Tours, that nothing had come of Bourbaki's attempt to divert part of the German forces against himself. The long delay led him to fear an attack from their whole force; he had therefore decided on a retreat, which resulted in the removal of the Assembly from Tours to Bordeaux.

At the Grand Duke's head-quarters a fresh attack was decided on for December 11th. The villages in front had been left strongly occupied, and it was only at noon that the enemy's retreat became known. They were at once pursued on the left by the Xth Corps, and on the right, south of the woods of Marchénoir, by the Grand Duke's force. On the north, the 4th Cavalry Division was engaged in scouting.

A thaw had followed the hard frost, making the march equally difficult for both armies. The Germans found the roads blocked with abandoned waggons and cast-away arms; the bodies of men

and horses lay unburied in the fields, and in the villages were hundreds of wounded quite uncared for. Several thousands of stragglers were captured.

The orders from the army head-quarters at Versailles were for a pursuit, which should render the enemy incapable of further action for some time to come; but not beyond Tours. The IInd Army was then to muster at Orleans and the Grand Duke's forces at Chartres, and the troops were to have the rest they needed. From the first point constant and strict watch could be kept on General Bourbaki's army, and to this end a connection was to be made with General von Zastrow, who was to go to Châtillon-sur-Seine on the 13th, with the VIIth Corps. Still, no operations were to extend beyond Bourges and Nevers.

The IInd Army was accordingly next marched on the Loir, and by the 13th held the line of Oucques—Conan—Blois, that town having been found evacuated.

On the 14th the 17th Division marched on Morée, and on the Loir past Fréteval. A fight ensued at both these points. Though the French had advanced so far, they seemed to intend making a firm stand on the Loir, where they had occupied Cloyes and Vendôme in great strength.

To attack with success, Prince Frederick Charles began by collecting all his forces. The IIIrd

Corps, hurrying after the army by forced marches, was in the first instance to fill the interval between the Grand Duke's forces and the Xth Corps, which was withdrawn from Blois and Herbault on Vendôme.

But when, on the 15th, the Xth Corps marched in that direction, the main body met with such a determined resistance close in front of Vendôme that it could not be overcome before dark. The troops therefore retired to quarters in the rear of Ste.-Anne. A left flanking detachment had found St.-Amand occupied by a strong force, and had halted at Gombergean. The IIIrd Corps had advanced in the course of the day on Coulommiers, near Vendôme, had fought the French at Bel-Essert, and driven them back across the Loir and established communications. The Grand Duke, in obedience to orders, acted at first on the defensive. The IXth Corps, after the restoration of the bridge at Blois, was at last able to follow the army, leaving a brigade in occupation.

A greatly superior force was now assembled opposite the enemy's position, and a general attack was decided on; but to give the troops a much-needed rest it was postponed till the 17th, and meanwhile, on the 16th, General Chanzy withdrew.

It had certainly been his intention to hold the Loir Valley still longer; but his Generals assured

him that the condition of the troops would not allow him to prolong the struggle. He accordingly gave the order for the retreat of the army at daybreak on Le-Mans, by Montoire, St.-Calais, and Vibraye.

"Thus, in the early morning, the Xth Corps found the French position in front of Vendôme abandoned, and entered the city without opposition. On the French left wing only, where marching orders had not yet arrived, General Jaurés made an attack on Fréteval, but in the evening he followed the other Corps.

THE INTERRUPTION OF SERIOUS OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS IN DECEMBER.

On the 17th of December general orders had been issued from Versailles to the Armies both to the north and south of Paris.

Now that General von Manteuffel had crossed the Somme, and Prince Frederick Charles the Loir, the Germans held possession of almost a third of France. The French were driven back on every side; and in order not to split up their forces, it was thought advisable that the Germans should concentrate into three principal divisions. The Ist Army was therefore to assemble at Beauvais, the Grand Duke's forces at Chartres, the IInd

Army near Orleans; the troops were to have some needful rest, and their efficiency to be restored by the arrival from Germany of fresh reliefs and equipment. If the French made any new move, they were to be allowed to approach as close as possible, and then be driven back by a strong attack.

The IInd Army had but little prospect at present of overtaking the enemy beyond the Loir; and the reports from the Upper Loire now necessitated a sharper look-out in that direction. News came from Gien that the posts established at Ouzouer on the Loire had been driven in; and it seemed not unlikely that General Bourbaki would take the opportunity of advancing by Montargis on Paris, or at least on Orleans, which at this moment was occupied by only a part of the Ist Bavarian Corps.

Prince Frederick Charles had got rid of his enemy, probably for some little time, and he decided, in obedience to orders from Versailles, to remain with his forces in an expectant attitude at Orleans. Only the Xth Corps was to be left to keep watch on the Loir. To secure support at once, for the Bavarian Corps in any case, the IXth Corps, on its arrival from Blois at La-Chapelle-Vendômoise, on the 16th, was ordered to march on Beaugency that day, and on Orleans on the morrow. It covered eleven German miles in twenty-four hours,

in very bad weather. The IIIrd Corps followed it up.

However, it was soon known that the enemy's detachment which had been at Gien did not form part of a large body of troops, and was intrenching itself at Briare for its own safety. So the Germans retired into comfortable quarters, the Ist Bavárian Corps at Orleans, the IIIrd there and at Beaugency, the IXth in the plain of the Loire and up as far as Châteauneuf, with a strong post at Montargis.

The Bavarian Corps was then transferred to Etampes, to recover at their leisure, to recruit their numbers, and make good their clothing and equipment. Nor were the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg's forces in a condition to pursue General Chanzy beyond the Loir. Six weeks of daily marching and fighting had tried them to the utmost. The dreadful weather and the state of the roads had reduced their clothing and boots to a miserable state. A reconnoissance beyond the Loir showed that the French could only be overtaken by long and rapid marches. So the Grand Duke allowed his troops a long rest, from the 18th, in the villages on the left bank of the river.

Of the IIIrd Army, General von Rheinbaben, on the contrary, had the three Brigades of the 5th Cavalry Division at Courtalin, Brou, and Chartres

reinforced by 5 battalions of Guard Landwehr and 4 batteries. A letter from the Chief of the General Staff at Versailles had pointed out that this cavalry might probably be employed with great success in attacking the flank and rear of the enemy's retreating columns, and the Crown Prince had already given orders that they should advance on Brou in full strength on the 15th. In contradiction to these, the Division obeyed an order which reached them on the 16th from the Grand Duke, under whose command they had not been placed, to take up a position on the Yères.

On this day the patrols had found the roads open to Montmirail and Mondoubleau, but there was a body of French infantry in front of Cloyes, which retired after a short fray. On the left, communications were established with the 4th Cavalry Division. On the 17th, the 12th Cavalry Brigade entered Cloyes, already evacuated by the French; on the 13th they advanced on Arrou, and only General von Bartz marched on Droue with a force of all arms, where he surprised the French at their cooking, and carried off much plunder.

On the 18th, the 12th Brigade still found a few stragglers there, but the other two brigades marched a little way to the westward on La-Bazoche-Gouet and Arville, whence the enemy had quite disappeared. To the south of Arville a batta-

lion of the Guard Landwehr drove the French infantry out of St.-Agil.

With this the pursuit ended on the 19th. The Division retired on Nogent-le-Rotrou by the Grand Duke's desire, and subsequently undertook the observation of the left bank of the Seine at Vernon and Dreux.

The Grand Duke's forces left their quarters on the Loir on the 21st. The 22nd Division occupied Nogent-le-Roi, and the 17th Chartres, till the 24th of the month. The 4th Bavarian Brigade rejoined its own Corps at Orleans.

During the remainder of December only the Xth Corps had any fighting, having been detailed to keep watch beyond the Loir from Blois and Vendôme.

Two brigades were marched on Tours on the 20th. On the further side of Monnaie they met the newly-formed troops of General Ferri-Pisani, 10,000 to 15,000 strong, and which were advancing from Angers on Tours.

The soaked ground made it most difficult to deploy the artillery and cavalry. The cavalry, indeed, could do no more than pursue the retreating French in deep columns along the high roads, thereby suffering severely from the enemy's fire, delivered at very short range.

On the following day General von Woyna advanced unopposed, with six battalions, on the bridge

at Tours. A light battery was driven up on the bank of the river and dispersed the masses firing from the opposite shore, but it would have cost too many lives to storm the city, which, since the removal of the seat of Government, had ceased to be of any great importance. The detachment was recalled to Monnaie, and the 19th Division went into quarters at Blois, the 20th at Herbault and Vendôme.

From thence, on the 27th, a detachment of two battalions, one squadron, and two guns marched past Montoire on Sougé on the Braye, and there met a greatly superior force. General Chanzy had, in fact, marched a Division of the XVIIth Corps on Vendôme to draw the Prussians away from Tours. Behind St. Quentin the weak Prussian detachment found itself hemmed in between the river and the cliff, enclosed on every side, and under heavy fire. Lieutenant-Colonel von Boltenstern succeeded, however, in cutting his way through. Without firing a shot the two Hanoverian battalions rushed on the dense body of tirailleurs who cut off their retreat, and fought their way out hand to hand. Through the gap thus made the guns followed, after firing a round of grape-shot, and notwithstanding losses to the teams they were got back to Montoire. The squadron also charged through two lines of riflemen and rejoined the infantry.

As a result of this incident General von Kraatz, after collecting the remainder of the 20th Division from Herbault, determined to enlighten the situation by a fresh reconnoissance. Four battalions were to advance from Vendôme, and the 1st Cavalry Brigade from Fréteval was to scout towards Epuisay. On this day, however, General de Jouffroy was marching on Vendôme to attack it with two Divisions.

When, at about ten o'clock, the reconnoitring force from Vendôme reached the Azay, they came under a hot fire from the opposite slope of the valley. Soon after this six French battalions attacked them in flank from the south, and repeated notice was brought in that considerable forces of the enemy were marching on Vendôme direct, from the north of Azay by Espéreuse. General von Kraatz perceived that he would have to face a planned attack from very superior numbers, and determined to restrict himself to the local defence of Vendôme. Under cover of a battalion, left to maintain its position at Huchepie, he achieved the retreat of the detachment in perfect order, and it then took up a position on the railway embankment to the west of the city.

Further to the north the French columns, advancing past Espéreuse, had already reached Bel-Air. A battalion hastening up from Vendôme

occupied the château, but being outflanked on the right by a superior force was obliged to retire, and likewise took up a position behind the railway. At about two o'clock the French attacked this position in dense masses of sharpshooters, but came under the fire of six batteries posted on the heights behind Vendôme, which drove back their right wing. A column advanced, along the left bank of the Loir from Varennes, to attack this line of guns, but hastily retreated out of range of their fire.

The attacks on the railway from Bel-Air and Tuileries were a more serious affair; eight companies placed there, however, repelled them. At four o'clock the French once more advanced in strength; fortune wavered for some time, and at last, as darkness fell, they retired.

The 1st Cavalry Brigade, with two companies and a horse battery, had marched on Danzé. Captain Spitz, with a small number of his Westphalian Fusiliers, fell on two batteries which had been drawn up there, and captured two guns and three limbers. With these and fifty prisoners General von Lüderitz returned to Fréteval by about one o'clock, after pursuing the enemy as far as Epuisay.

The French attempt on Vendôme had utterly failed, and they now retreated to a greater distance. General von Kraatz, however, was ordered, with an

eye to a greater enterprise to be described later, to remain in a state of preparation on the Loir.

THE XIVTH CORPS IN DECEMBER.

In the south-eastern scene of war the French had at last decided on some definite action.

Garibaldi's Corps, assembled at Autun, advanced on the 24th; the detachments marched by Sombernon and St.-Seine, with various skirmishes and night attacks, close up to the front. Crémer's Division advanced on Gevrey from the south. But as soon as reinforcements had reached Dijon from Gray and Is-sur-Tille, the enemy was driven back, and now General von Werder, on his part, ordered the 1st Brigade to march on Autun. General Keller arrived in front of the town on December 1st, driving the French before him. Preparations had been made to attack on the following day, when orders came for a rapid retreat. Fresh detachments were needed at Châtillon, where those posted to protect the railway had been surprised, at Gray, against sorties by the garrison of Besançon, and also to observe Langres.

The Prussian Brigade marched on Langres with two cavalry regiments and three batteries, and on the 16th they met the French not far from Longeau, in number about 2000. The French were

repulsed, losing 200 wounded, fifty prisoners, two guns, and two ammunition waggons. General von der Goltz had, in a day or two, surrounded Langres, driven the Gardes-Mobiles posted outside into the fortress, and occupied a position on the north for the protection of the railways.

In the country south of Dijon fresh massing of the French troops had now been observed. To disperse these General von Werder advanced on the 18th with two Baden Brigades on Nuits. In Boncourt, close to the town on the east, the advanced guard met with lively opposition, but carried the place by noon. The French, assisted by their batteries drawn up on the hills west of Nuits, offered an obstinate defence in the deep railway cutting and by the Meuzin. When the main body of the Brigade came up at two o'clock General von Glümer ordered a general attack. The infantry now rushed across the open plain, with great loss, especially in superior officers, against the enemy, who was well under cover and who, firing at short range, was not driven back on Nuits till four o'clock, after a hand-to-hand struggle. At five o'clock they abandoned the place to the German battalions.

The Germans had met Crémer's Division, 10,000 strong, which had lost 1700 men, among them 650 unwounded prisoners. The Baden Divisions, too, had lost 900 men. They encamped for the night

on the market-place of the town and in the villages to the eastward.

Next morning the French were found to have retreated still further, but the Germans were not strong enough for pursuit. The XIVth Corps had already been obliged to spare seven battalions for the investment of Belfort. General von Werder therefore returned to Dijon, where he assembled all the forces still left to him with those of General von der Goltz from Langres, waiting to see whether the French would renew the attack. But the month of December ended without any further disturbance.

THE IST ARMY IN DECEMBER.

While the IInd Army was fighting on the Loire, General von Manteuffel, after the siege of Amiens, had marched on Rouen.

General Farre was indeed at Arras, in the rear of this movement, but the disorder in which his troops had retired after that battle made it probable that he would do nothing, at any rate for the present. The 3rd Brigade, too, was left in Amiens with two cavalry regiments and three batteries, to occupy the place and protect the important line of railway to Laon.

The outlook on the west was more serious than on the north, for there, at this juncture, French

forces threatened to interfere with the investment of Paris. General Briand was at Rouen with 20,000 men, and had advanced his leading troops as far forward as the Epte, where, at Beauvais and Gisors, he met the Dragoon Guards sent in from the Army of the Meuse and the Saxon Cavalry Division. The detachment of infantry which had escorted the cavalry had lost 150 men and a gun in a night attack.

When the Ist Army reached the Epte, on December 3rd, the two Cavalry Divisions joined the march, and the French retired behind the Andelles. The VIIIth Corps arrived near Rouen, after skirmishes on the road, and found an intrenched position abandoned at Isneauville ; and on December 5th General von Goeben entered the chief city of Normandy. The 29th Brigade advanced on Pont-Audemer, the Ist Corps crossed the Seine higher up, at Les-Andelys and Pont-de-l'Arche. Vernon and Evreux were occupied, numbers of Gardes-Mobiles having retreated by railway to Liseux. On the northern bank the Dragoon Guards reconnoitred as far as Bolbec, and the Uhlans found no French even in Dieppe.

The French had retired to Le-Havre, and a considerable force had been conveyed, in ships that were in readiness, to Honfleur, on the other bank of the Seine. The 16th Division continued its

march, reaching Bolbec and Lillebonne on the 11th.

The orders from head-quarters at Versailles had been transmitted by the Chief of the General Staff, and, in obedience to these, General Manteuffel now decided on leaving only the Ist Corps on the Lower Seine, and returning with the VIIIth on the Somme, where the French in Arras were now becoming active.

Besides making this evident by various small encounters, on December 9th they had attacked a company detailed to protect the reconstruction of the railway at Ham, surprising it at night, and taking most of the men prisoners; and on the 11th several French battalions advanced as far as La-Fère.

To check their further progress, the Army of the Meuse sent detachments to Soissons and Compiegne. General Count von der Groeben took up a position at Roye with part of the garrison from Amiens, and on the 16th encountered the 15th Division at Montdidier, which immediately retired on the Somme.

Only the citadel of Amiens was now held by the Germans; General von Manteuffel, who had not approved of the evacuation of the town, ordered an immediate reoccupation. The inhabitants had, however, remained peaceable, and on the 20th the 16th Division, which had given up the attack on Le-Havre, arrived *viâ* Dieppe.

A reconnoissance action by Querrieux made it certain that great numbers of French were drawn up on the bank of the Hallue, and General von Manteuffel now concentrated the whole Corps at Amiens. Reinforcements might shortly be expected, for the 3rd Reserve Division was on the march, and had already reached St.-Quentin. The Ist Corps was also ordered to send another brigade from Rouen to Amiens by railway, and the General in command determined to attack at once with 22,600 men, his only available force.

General Faidherbe had assembled two Corps, the XXIInd and XXIIIrd. His advance on Ham and La-Fère, intended to divert the Prussians from attacking Le-Havre, had succeeded. He next turned on Amiens, and had advanced to within two miles (German). He now stood, with 43,000 men and eighty-two guns, fronting to the west behind the Hallue. Two Divisions held the left bank of this stream for one and a half miles, from its confluence at Daours up to Contay, and two beyond, at Corbie and Fravillers. The Somme secured their left flank.

On December 23rd General von Manteuffel, with the VIIIth Corps, advanced on the road to Albert. The 3rd Brigade of the Ist Corps formed his reserve. He intended to keep the French busy with the 15th Division on their front and left wing, and with the 16th Division outflank their right. The unexpected

extension of the French right wing prevented this, and it became a front-to-front battle along the whole line. The commanding height of the eastern bank gave the French a superior artillery position, and the villages lying at the foot had in every instance to be stormed.

The French had withdrawn their outposts to this line when, at eleven o'clock, the head of the 15th Division reached the copse at Querrieux, and brought up a battery. Two battalions of the 29th Brigade took the place at mid-day at the first onslaught, crossed the stream, drove the French on the further bank out of Noyelles; but they now found themselves under an artillery and infantry fire from all sides. The East Prussians stormed the slope at about four o'clock, and took two guns which were being served, but were forced to retire to the village before the advancing masses of the French.

Soon after mid-day, too, Féchencourt was carried on the left, and Bussy on the right; and the enemy, after a feeble resistance, was driven back across the stream. Here, on the other hand, the German Artillery could at first do nothing against the strong and well-posted batteries of the French. Vecquemont, however, was stormed, though stoutly defended, and street-fighting lasted till the afternoon.

The 15th Division, against the intentions of their leader, had become involved in the fight before the 16th, operating more to the left, could afford them any assistance. It was not till four o'clock that the 31st Brigade arrived at Béhencourt, and, crossing the river by flying bridges, drove the French back into the village, where they still offered a firm, stout resistance, but had finally to give way. The 32nd Brigade, on the extreme left, got across the Hallue and into Bavelincourt.

Thus all the hamlets on the river were in the hands of the Germans; but the short December day was closing in, and further progress must be postponed till the morrow. Even in the dark the French made several attempts to regain the positions they had lost, particularly about Contay, where they overlapped the German position. But their attacks were repulsed both there and at Noyelles. They succeeded, indeed, in getting into Vecquemont, but were driven out again, and then the Prussians, pursuing them across the stream, also carried Daours, so that finally the Germans held every passage of the Hallue.

The battle was over by six o'clock. The troops retired into quarters in the captured villages, placing outposts near every egress.

The attack had cost the Germans 900 men; the defence had cost the French about 1000,

besides 1000 unwounded prisoners taken into Amiens.

At daybreak on the 24th the French opened fire on the Hallue cutting.

Having ascertained that the enemy's numbers were almost double, it was decided this day on the German side to act only on the defensive, awaiting the arrival of reinforcements and intrenching themselves in the positions gained. The army reserve was pushed forward on Corbie to threaten the French left flank.

But at two o'clock in the afternoon General Faidherbe was already retiring. His insufficiently-clothed troops had suffered fearfully through the bitter winter's night, and were much shaken by the unfavourable issue of the fight. He therefore led them back under shelter of the fortresses. When, on the 25th, the two Prussian Divisions and the cavalry pursued them beyond Albert, and then almost as far as Arras and up to Cambrai, they found no compact force at all, and only captured some hundreds of stragglers.

When General Manteuffel had disposed of the enemy, he sent General von Mirus to invest Péronne, while he himself returned to Rouen.

By drafting off six battalions as a reinforcement to Amiens, the Ist Army Corps was left with only two brigades. The French had 10,000 men on

the right bank, and 12,000 on the left bank of the lower Seine. And these forces had come very close to Rouen; on the south side within two miles. Meanwhile, however, the 2nd Brigade had again been sent up from Amiens, and on its arrival the hostile force was once more driven back.

THE TAKING OF MÉZIÈRES.

On the northern field of war, before the end of the year, the siege of Mézières was brought to an end. After the battle of Sedan the Commandant had to send out provisions from the stores of the besieged town for the maintenance of the large number of prisoners, and it was, therefore, for the present exempted from attack. After that the fortress precluded the use of the railroad; still it was only kept under observation till the 19th of December, when, after the disaster of Montmédy, the 14th Division fell back on Mézières.

The garrison numbered only 2000 men, but it was effectually seconded without by volunteers, who were extremely active in this broken and wooded country. The town was not completely invested till the 25th.

Mézières stands on a spur of the mountains, surrounded on three sides by the Moselle, and shut in by high ground. The construction of the

fortress, which was strengthened by Vauban, was not calculated to resist modern artillery. There was an outer rampart at a distance of from 2000 to 3000 mètres from the inner wall, and although the long delay had been utilized to make good the weak points by throwing up earthworks, a bombardment could not fail to be fatal to the defence.

When Verdun had surrendered, heavy artillery had to be brought by rail from Clermont to a position close under the southern front of the fortress. The only hindrance to the erection of the batteries was the state of the soil, which was frozen to a depth of twenty inches; but at a quarter past eight on the morning of the 31st of December eight field-guns opened fire.

At first the fort replied vigorously, but by the afternoon its artillery was silenced, and the white flag was hoisted next morning.

The garrison were taken prisoners; large stores and 132 guns fell into the hands of the Germans. But the chief advantage gained was the opening of another line of railway to Paris.

PARIS IN DECEMBER.

In Paris General Ducrot had been busily employed in making good the losses sustained at Villiers. A part of the greatly reduced Ist Corps

must be kept in reserve, the IInd Army was redistributed. A sortie by the peninsula of Gennevillers and the heights of Franconville had not been approved by the government. They expected confidently to see the Army of Orleans appear ere long under the walls of the capital, and steps were being taken on the 6th of December to facilitate a junction, when a letter from General von Moltke announced the defeat of General d'Aurelle and the occupation of Orleans. A sortie to the south would thenceforth be aimless, and after long discussion it was at last decided to break through the enemy's lines on the north by a great collective effort.

The little stream of the Morée offered some protection on that side, but only so long as the ice would not bear. And there were but three German corps amounting to 81,200, over an extent of forty-five kilomètres (twenty-seven miles English).

Earthworks were constructed in preparation between Bondy and Courneuve, the forts to the north were armed with heavier guns, and a battery was mounted on Mont-Avron. Ninety rounds of ammunition were served out to each man, with six days' rations; and four days' fodder for the horses. They were forbidden to carry their kit, but the camp bedding was to be taken

The day at first fixed was December 19th, but it was postponed till the 21st.

Thus, during great part of the month, the investing army remained almost undisturbed by the defenders. Regular food, warm winter clothing, and abundant supplies through the unfailing punctuality of the mails, had kept the troops in a thoroughly satisfactory condition.

The preparations of the garrison for a new offensive did not escape the notice of the besieging forces. Deserters brought reports of an imminent sortie. On the 20th information came from the posts of observation that a large force was assembling at Merlan and Noisy-le-Sec, and early on the 21st the 2nd Division of foot-guards were, by order of the Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the Meuse, in readiness to cross the Morée. Part of the 1st Division remained in reserve at Gonesse; the rest were to be relieved by the 7th, and brought into action. On the right wing the Landwehr Division of Guards occupied the country between Chatou and Carrières-St.-Denis; on the left a brigade of the Saxon Corps held Séran. The 4th Infantry Division of the IInd Corps were drawn back on Malnoue to support the Wurtemburgers in case of need, as they were to make a stand against the French at Joinville.

To divert the attention of the Germans from the true point of attack, a brisk fire was to be opened early in the day from St.-Valérien; a considerable force was to engage the right wing of the Guards, General Vinoy was to lead the IIIrd Army against the Saxons, and Admiral de la Roucière was to fall upon Le-Bourget. This place, which was a standing threat, must at any rate be seized, and not till then was General Ducrot to cross the Morée, near Blancmesnil and Aulnay, with the IInd Paris Army.

THE FIGHT AT LE-BOURGET.

(December 21st.)

Le-Bourget was held by only four companies of Queen Elizabeth's Regiment (German) and one battalion of foot guards. When the mist rose at about a quarter to eight, the little force found itself under fire from the forts and several batteries, as well as from the armour-clad railway carriages. Within half an hour strong columns of the French were marching up from east and west. To the east the village was defended for some time against seven French battalions, and on the other side, five were brought to a standstill close to the church by the rapid fire of the Germans; but some of the marine fusiliers made

their way into the place from the north. Pressed on all sides by superior numbers, the defence was concentrated at the southern end of the village. The party holding the churchyard tried to force their way through to this point, but some of them were taken prisoners in the attempt. The French advanced step by step under great loss, and did not succeed in obtaining possession of the glass-works. Five fresh battalions of the French reserve marched up from St.-Denis to the gas-works, and battered down the garden-wall, but still could not break the steady resistance of the Germans.

At nine o'clock they were reinforced by one company, and at ten o'clock by seven more, who, in a bloody hand-to-hand struggle, fought their way to the churchyard and gas-works. By eleven the last of the assailants were routed, and Le Bourget, in the expectation of a fresh attack, was occupied by fifteen companies. Two batteries of field artillery, which had been busy by the brook, were brought up to defend the village.

Meanwhile General Ducrot had waited in vain for the signal which should have announced success at Le-Bourget. He had pushed the advanced guard of his army past Bondy and Drancy, when he was warned by the disastrous issue of the struggle on his left to give up the attack on the line by the Morée.

The triumphant exploit became a mere cannonade, to which the German field-guns replied as far as possible. By noon the French had retired.

They had lost, by their own account, about 600 men. The German Guards had sacrificed 400, but they carried off 360 prisoners. In the evening the outposts resumed their old positions.

The various feints of the Parisian garrison had had no result, and produced no alteration in the plan pursued by the German Commander-in-Chief. Their advance from St.-Denis to Etains had been repulsed, and two gun-boats on the Seine were driven back by the fire of four field batteries on Orgemont. The trifling sortie on Chatou was scarcely heeded. General Vinoy had indeed led a larger force along the right bank of the Marne, but that was not till the afternoon when the fight at Le-Bourget was over. The Saxon outposts retired to the intrenched position near Le Chenay. One of the German battalions in quarters there drove the enemy out of Maison-Blanche that same evening, another attacked Ville-Evrart, where fighting went on till midnight; they lost seventy men, but brought in 600 prisoners. Next morning the French abandoned Ville-Evrart, under the fire of the German artillery posted on the heights on the opposite side of the river.

Paris had now been invested for three months.

A bombardment—never a satisfactory mode of action—could have no decisive effect against so large a place; and the Germans were, in fact, well aware that nothing could reduce it but a regular siege. But the engineering siege-works must wait till the artillery were in a position to second them.

It has already been shown that the fortress artillery had been first employed against those forts which interrupted the communications in the rear of the army. There were indeed 235 heavy pieces standing ready for action at Villacoublay; but it had proved impossible as yet to bring up the necessary ammunition for an attack which, when once begun, must on no account be allowed to flag.

By the end of November, railway communication had been opened with Chelles, but the greater part of the ammunition had meanwhile been deposited at Lagny, and would now have to be forwarded by the cross-road. The ordinary country carts with two wheels proved totally unfit for the transport of shell, and only 2000 four-wheeled carts could be requisitioned for many miles round. Hence 960 more were brought from Metz with horses sent from Germany, and even the teams of the IIIrd Army were called into requisition, though they were almost indispensable just then as remounts towards the efficiency of the army on the

Loire. Finally, all the horses of the pontoon trains, of the field bridging troops, and the columns of intrenching tools were taken for the transport service.

A new difficulty arose when the breaking-up of the ice necessitated the removal of the pontoon-bridges over the Seine.

The roads were so bad that it took the waggons nine days to get from Nanteuil to Villacoublay and back. Many broke down under their loads, and the drivers constantly took to flight. And at this juncture the chief of the staff gave the artillery another task to be carried out forthwith.

Though the besieged had not hitherto succeeded in fighting their way through the enemy's lines, they now proposed to extend their operations so as to repel the besiegers till the circle became so thin that it could be broken. On the south side the German lines already extended beyond Vitry and Villejuif to the Seine; and on the north, between Drancy and the Fort-de-l'Est, there was an extensive system of trenches and batteries reaching to Le-Bourget over a distance of 1000 mètres, which in part might be dignified as regular siege-works. The hard frost had indeed arrested their construction, but they were armed with artillery and occupied by the IInd Army. Hence the most favourable *point-d'appui* for a sortie to the east,

as well as to the north, was the commanding eminence of Mont-Avron, which, with its seventy heavy guns, stood out in the Marne valley like the point of a wedge between the northern and southern German lines.

THE REDUCTION OF MONT-AVRON.

(December 27th.)

To drive the French from this position fifty heavy guns from Germany, and twenty-six from La-Fère were brought up under the command of Colonel Bartsch. By the exertions of a whole battalion as a working party, two groups of batteries were erected in spite of the severe frost, on the western slopes of the hills behind Raincy and Gagny, and on the left ridge of the Marne Valley near Noisy-le-Grand, thus threatening Mont-Avron on each side at a distance of from 2000 to 3000 mètres.

At half-past eight on the 27th of December these guns opened fire. A heavy snowstorm interfered with accurate aim, and prevented any observation of the execution done. Mont-Avron with the forts of Nogent and Rosny replied promptly and rapidly.

The German batteries had lost two officers and twenty-five gunners, several gun-carriages had broken down under their own fire, and everything

pointed to the conclusion that no result would be obtained on that day. But the firing had been more effectual than the men supposed. The fine weather on the 28th allowed of greater precision; the Prussian fire proved most telling, making fearful havoc of the strong but exposed French infantry garrison. Mont-Avron was silenced and the forts only kept up a feeble fire. General Trochu, who had commanded in person, ordered the troops to abandon Mont-Avron, and it was so effectually disarmed in the course of the night by the energy of Colonel Stoffel that only one disabled gun was left on its flank.

On the 29th the French guns were silenced, and the hill was deserted, as the Germans had no intention of occupying the position Their batteries were now turned on the forts, which suffered severely, and on the earthworks near Bondy.

Before the year was out the besiegers succeeded in storing the most indispensable ammunition in Villacoublay. The siege operations were entrusted to General Kameky, the artillery was under the command of General Prince Hohenlohe. The batteries had long been finished, and by the dawn of the new year 100 guns of the heaviest calibre were ready to open fire on the southern fortifications.

V.

ACTIVE OPERATIONS IN THE PROVINCES.

The Army of the East under General Bourbaki.

While the French forces were engaged in constant fighting, in the north, on the Seine and the Somme, in the south, on the Loire and Saone, General Bourbaki's army had kept out of sight. Since the 8th of December, when the 6th Division of cavalry had reported its presence at Vierzon, all trace of it had been lost. It was, of course, of the greatest importance to the German Commander-in-Chief to know the whereabouts of so large an army; only the IInd German Army could learn this, and on the 22nd received instructions to reconnoitre.

To this end General von Rantzau set out from Montargis towards Briare, where he found that the French had abandoned their position; in the course of the next few days he met them, and was defeated.

The Hessians were reinforced to a strength of three battalions, four squadrons and six field-pieces, but were nevertheless withdrawn to Gien on the 1st of January. The French had displayed a force of several thousand Gardes-Mobiles, twelve guns, and a body of marine infantry. A noticeable fact was that some of the prisoners taken belonged to the XVIIIth French Corps, which formed part of the Ist Army of the Loire.

A regiment of the 6th Division of Cavalry, sent out to reconnoitre on the road to Sologne, returned with the report that a strong force of the French were marching in column on Aubigny-Ville. On the other hand, two drivers, who had been taken prisoners, declared that the troops from Bourges were already being moved by railway, and the newspapers pointed to the same conclusion; still, too much weight could not be attached to mere rumour as against a circumstantial report. At Versailles it must be assumed that the Ist Army of the Loire had not moved from Bourges, and that General Bourbaki, after recuperating his forces, would act in concert with General Chanzy.

These two armies might attack the Germans at Orleans on both sides, or one might engage and detain them there, while the other marched to relieve the capital.

This, in fact, was what General Chanzy proposed. Since the 21st of December he had been resting in quarters in and about Le-Mans, where railways from four directions facilitated the arrival of new detachments. His troops had no doubt great difficulties to contend with. For lack of billets for so large a force some had to camp out under tents in the snow, and suffered severely from the intense cold. The hospitals were full of wounded, and small-pox broke out. On the other hand, these narrow quarters were favourable to the redistribution of the companies and the restoration of discipline. The news from Paris, too, urged the General to prompt action.

General Trochu had sent word that Paris could not, unaided, repel the enemy. Even if a sortie should prove successful, the necessary provisions could not be carried through, and nothing but the simultaneous arrival of an army from without could secure supplies. Now General Chanzy was quite ready to march on Paris, but it was indispensable that he should first know exactly what Generals Bourbaki and Faidherbe were doing.

Of course, the concerted action of the three great Army Corps could only be planned and ordered from head-quarters. The General therefore sent an officer of his Staff on the 23rd of December to Gambetta at Lyons, to express his opinion that

only a prompt and combined advance could prevent the surrender of Paris. But the Minister believed that he knew better. The first news of a quite different employment of Bourbaki's army only reached Chanzy on the 29th, when Bourbaki was already on the march. Nor did Gambetta's reply convey either distinct orders or sufficient information. "Vous avez décimé les Mecklembourgeois, les Bavarois n'existent plus, le reste de l'armée est déjà envahi par l'inquiétude et la lassitude. Persistons et nous renverrons ces hordes hors du sol, les mains vides."[1] The plan of the Provisional Government was to be that "which would most demoralize the German army."[2]

Under such obscure instructions from headquarters, General Chanzy, trusting to his own forces, determined to make his way to Paris unaided; but he soon found himself in serious difficulties.

The Germans had no time to lose if they wished to profit by their position between the two hostile armies, advantageous so long as those armies were not too close upon them. The simultaneous attacks, on the 31st of December, at Vendôme on

[1] "You have decimated the Mecklenburgers, the Bavarians are wiped out, the rest of the army is a prey to uneasiness and exhaustion. Let us persevere, and we shall drive these hordes off the land, empty-handed."

[2] "Qui démoralisera le plus l'armée Allemande."

the Loir, and at Briare on the Loire, seemed to indicate that they were already acting on a concerted plan.

On New Year's Day orders were telegraphed to Prince Frederick Charles to re-cross the Loir and march against General Chanzy without delay, as being the nearest and most imminently dangerous enemy. To effect this the IInd Army was strengthened by the addition of the XIIIth Corps of the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg (17th and 22nd Divisions) and the 2nd and 4th Divisions of Cavalry. The 5th Cavalry Division was despatched to protect the advance on the left flank.

Only the 25th (Hessian) Division was to be left in Orleans to receive General Bourbaki, and to keep a look-out on Gien. To provide against a possible advance of the Army of the Loire, General von Zastrow was posted at Armançon with the VIIth Corps; the IInd Corps was detached from the besieging force and sent forward towards Montargis.

Prince Frederick Charles expected to get three of his corps on the Vendôme-Morée line by the 6th of January, and to move the XIIIth from Chartres on Brou.

THE ADVANCE ON LE-MANS.

The Germans had hoped to find the enemy in winter quarters; but General Chanzy had provided

against surprise by strong outposts. Nogent-le-Rotrou on his left was held by General Rousseau's Division, and a large force of volunteers; strong detachments were posted from Vibraye and St. Calais, as far as the Braye stream, where General Jouffroy had come to a stand after the last action at Vendôme; on his right he had General Barry at La-Chartre, and de Curten's Division at Château-Renault.

The wings of the German army came into collision with these forces on the 5th of January.

General Baumgarth, on the German left, had brought three battalions, two regiments of cavalry and two batteries, as far as St.-Amand. The 57th had stormed Villeporcher, on the road to Château-Renault, had retired before four battalions of the French, and then had recaptured and held it. This much, at any rate, was now clear: a not inconsiderable force of French was assembled in front of the left wing of the German army, now marching westward. In following up this movement General Baumgarth was now deputed to ensure its safety, and with this object was reinforced by the addition of the 6th Cavalry Division and the 1st Cavalry Brigade.

The 44th Brigade on the right, in its advance on Nogent-le-Rotrou, had had a sharp encounter. It stormed the enemy's position at La-Fourche, and seized three guns, with a large

number of prisoners. The main body of the Corps reached Beaumont-les-Autels and Brou, but the cavalry failed to penetrate the woods to the north of Nogent.

January 6th.—By six in the morning the advanced guard of General Baumgarth's detachment was on the march to Prunay, but the main body could not follow, having to face a strong attack at about half-past nine. With a view to observing the enemy, the German infantry were opened out to great intervals between Villeporcher and Ambloy, and only a small reserve remained at La Noue. The engagement soon assumed wider proportions, and the Germans with difficulty maintained the Les-Haies—Pias line, being seriously threatened by the envelopment of their left wing, which the 6th Cavalry Division were now able to join, but could only come into action with one horse battery. The reserve, however, moved up along the high road to Château-Renault and repulsed the French, who had already made their way into Les-Haies. But when they renewed the attack in close columns and brought up four batteries against the place, the Germans were obliged to retire behind the Brenne.

Meanwhile the 16th Regiment, which had already got as far as Ambloy on the march to Vendôme, had turned back to St.-Amand to support General Baumgarth, and the 38th

Brigade of infantry deployed between Neuve St.-Amand and St.-Amand with a strong force of cavalry on each wing. But as by some mistake the town was evacuated, the General of the 6th Division of Cavalry, Duke William of Mecklenburg, ordered a retreat. The infantry had already come to a stand at Huisseau and there found quarters. The advanced guard fell back on Ambloy; the cavalry partly on Ambloy and partly on Villeromain.

During the engagement at St.-Amand the Xth Corps had advanced on Montoire, in two columns along the left bank of the Loire, leaving a battalion before Vendôme on the right, to secure the egress of the IIIrd Corps at this spot.

When the 20th Division reached St.-Rimay, at about one o'clock, they found the hills on the opposite side of the Loir occupied by General Barry's troops. All the German batteries were brought up to the southern ridge of the valley and soon drove the French off the broad slopes; but the defile of Les-Roches in the front remained quite unassailable. The ruined bridge at Lavardin, lower down the stream, was therefore made practicable with pontoons. The 19th Division had meanwhile reached that place, several battalions crossed from the south to attack Les-Roches, and easily dislodged the French. As darkness came on, preventing any further ad-

vance, the Corps found quarters in and about Montoire.

The General in command of the IIIrd Corps had intended this day to make a halt before Vendôme, and only push forward his advanced guard as far as the Azay; but this detachment met ere long with such stout opposition, that the main force was compelled to advance to their assistance. General de Jouffroy, with the idea of helping General de Curten, had started to renew the attack on Vendôme, so the advanced guard of the 5th Division, on reaching Villiers at about half-past one, found the 10th Battalion of Jägers, which had been marching at the same time along the right bank of the Loir, engaged at Villiers in a sharp fight which had already lasted four hours. They brought their two batteries up to the plateau to the north of the village, and the 48th Regiment made its way to the ridge of the lower Azay valley, though its broad meadow slopes were swept by the French long-range rifles and the artillery which fired down the valley. And here the French sent over swarms of sharp-shooters to continue the attack.

The 8th Regiment (German) was presently brought up, and after a short fight on the right took possession of Le-Gué-du-Loir; then further reinforcement arrived in the 10th Infantry Brigade, and by degrees the Prussian guns num-

bered thirty-six. The French artillery could not face their fire, and within half an hour it was turned on the infantry. At about half-past four the German battalions got across the valley, seized the vineyards and farms on the opposite hills, and stormed Mazange. Under cover of the darkness the French retired to Lunay.

Further to the right (German) the 6th Division, on leaving Vendôme at eleven o'clock, found the battalion left by the Xth Corps at Courtiras fighting hard against a very superior force of the French. The 11th Brigade advanced upon the Azay intrenchment, though not without heavy loss, and when at about half-past three the 12th also came up, the artillery was brought to bear upon the place; Azay was stormed, the river was crossed, and they established themselves on the heights beyond. The French repeatedly returned to the charge, but were successfully repulsed, and by five o'clock fighting was over and the French driven back.

The IIIrd Army Corps took up quarters between the Azay stream and the Loir. A detachment was told off to occupy Danzé, higher up the river. It had lost thirty-nine officers and above 400 men, but had also taken 400 prisoners.

In the course of the day the IXth Corps crossed the upper Loir at Fréteval and St. Hilaire, without opposition, and proceeded along the high road

to St.-Calais, as far as Busloup. The XIIIth remained at Unverre, Beaumont, and La Fourche.

Prince Frederick Charles had not been led into any change of purpose by the attack on St.-Amand and the obstinate fight at the Azay. The XIIIth Corps was expected to reach Montmirail, and the XIth to be at Epuisay, both by the 11th of January; the IIIrd was to continue the attack on the French at Braye. But after the reverse experienced at St.-Amand, the presence of a strong French force on the left flank could not be suffered to pass unnoticed. Duke William was given verbal orders, at the head-quarters at Vendôme, to return forthwith to St.-Amand with the 6th Division of Cavalry, and General von Voigts-Rhetz was ordered to support General Baumgarth, if necessary, with his whole corps.

The country between the Loir and the Sarthe, through which the Germans must march, offers peculiar difficulties to an invading force, and great advantages for its defence.

The roads leading to Le-Mans are all intersected at right angles by numerous streams flowing through broad and somewhat deep meadow valleys. Groves, villages, and country-houses with walled parks cover the cultivated high ground; vineyards, orchards and gardens are enclosed by hedges, ditches or fences. Hence almost the whole

burthen of the struggle in view had to be borne by the infantry; there was no space for deploying cavalry, and the use of artillery must be extremely limited, since in a country so closely overgrown only one gun could be brought to bear at a time. The enemy's centre could only be approached by four high roads, and the communications between the columns, starting at least six miles apart, were confined to the cross roads, which were almost impassable from the severity of the season and the hostility of the inhabitants. Anything like mutual support was, at first, quite out of the question.

Under these conditions their movements could only be guided by general instructions, and the officers must be left free to act on their own responsibility. Special orders for each day, though they were indeed issued, might, in many cases, be impossible to execute. The Commander-in-Chief could not foresee in what relation the various corps might stand to each other after a day's fight. Reports could only come in at a late hour of the night, and the orders previously drawn up often came to hand when the troops, to utilize the short day, had already set out on the march.

January 7th.—In obedience to orders from headquarters, General Voigts-Rhetz sent that part of the 19th Division which had already reached Vendôme,

back to the support of St.-Amand. The 38th Brigade had reached this place early in the day, and General von Hartmann, who had taken the command of it, marched out, the cavalry forming a right and left wing, by the high road to Château-Renault.

The advancing column found the enemy at Villechauve, at about mid-day. A thick fog prevented the employment of the artillery, and it was at the cost of many killed that Villechauve, Pias, and some other farms were seized from the French. Villeporcher and the adjacent hamlets were in their possession, and at about two o'clock they came out and attacked on the high road with a force of several battalions. The weather had cleared, and it was soon evident that this move was only intended to screen the beginning of a retreat of the French to the westward.

The Germans were quartered on the spot, and the reinforcements sent to their aid remained at St.-Amand.

The Xth Corps, waiting for their return, did not quit its quarters at La-Chartre; only the 14th Brigade of Cavalry went on to La-Richardière to maintain communication with the IIIrd. But they did not succeed in taking the village with only dismounted troopers.

General von Alvensleben hoped to come upon

the French on that side of the Braye, and to get round their left wing so as to join the Xth Corps, who had promised him assistance. The IIIrd Corps made its way towards Epuisay, leaving one brigade at Mazange, and as soon as news reached it on the march, that the French had abandoned Lunay and Fortan, that brigade also proceeded to Fortan.

Epuisay was found to be strongly occupied, for the advanced guard of the IXth Corps, retreating from Busloup, had just arrived there. It was not till half-past one that the French were expelled from the little town, having barricaded the streets; and even after crossing the Braye they fought hard, under shelter of various villages and farmsteads.

A long fusilade on both sides was kept up through the thick fog; but at last, at about four o'clock, the 12th German Brigade got forward to the ridge of the valley. The 9th Brigade took possession of Savigny without meeting any serious opposition, and Sougé was stormed in the dusk.

The corps had lost forty-five men and taken 200 prisoners. It found quarters behind the Braye, but placed outposts on the western bank.

The IXth Corps retired for the night to Epuisay though two corps lost their way in one of the few roads in the neighbourhood. On the right, the

2nd Division of Cavalry went off to Mondoubleau, to join the XIIIth Corps. The French retreated to St.-Calais.

The order from head-quarters, that the XIIIth Corps was to march on Montmirail, had been issued on the hypothesis that it would have reached Nogent-le-Rotrou by the 6th, whereas it had in fact, as has been shown, remained at La-Fourche, Beaumont, and Unverre. The Grand Duke, who had expected a stout resistance, did not set out to attack Nogent till the 7th. When the 22nd. Division reached the spot, they found all the villages deserted in the valley of the Upper Huisne, and entered the town without any fighting, at about two o'clock. They took up quarters there; the 4th Cavalry Division went to Thirion-Gardais, and only the advanced guard went to search for the enemy. They found the wood by Le-Gibet strongly occupied by the French, and did not succeed in getting there till night-fall. The French retired to La-Ferté-Bernard.

The 17th Division had at first gone with the reserve; but at one o'clock, in consequence of the reports brought in, the Grand Duke diverted it to Authon on the south; and in order to follow instructions from head-quarters as closely as possible he pushed at least a detachment of two battalions, two cavalry regiments, and one battery on towards

Montmirail, under the command of General von Rauch.

January 8th.—Finding, on the morning of the 8th, that the French had made no further attempt on St.-Amand, General von Hartmann, at nine o'clock, sent back the troops told off for his support. At ten o'clock he received instructions to join the XVIIIth Corps also; but the French still held Villeporcher and the wood lying behind it, and were also drawn up across the road to Château-Renault in a very advantageous position behind the river Brenne. The General perceived the necessity of making a stand at this spot, and took the best means to that end by acting himself on the offensive. Supported by the fire of his battery, and with the cavalry on either flank, six companies of the 6th Regiment marched on Villeporcher, drove the defence into the wood of Château-Renault, and took 100 prisoners. On the left, the 9th Uhlans rode down the Chasseurs d'Afrique. Not till darkness had set in did General von Hartmann retire in the direction of Montoire.

General von Voigts-Rhetz had already set out from thence very early in the day. The night's frost had covered the roads with ice, which greatly impeded any movement. The road on the right bank of the Loir was in many places broken up. It leads up and down a series of abrupt hollows, and

on emerging from these the advanced guard found themselves face to face with a force of about 1000 Gardes-Mobiles, who had taken up a position in front of La-Chartre. Their mitrailleuses were soon forced to a hasty retreat by the fire of two field-pieces, but it was only after a prolonged struggle that the German infantry, moving with difficulty, succeeded in entering the town, where they took up their quarters. Two battalions, which were sent further on the road, had to fight for their night's lodging; all through the night shots were being exchanged with the French in the neighbourhood, and 230 prisoners were taken.

The 39th Brigade, which left Ambloy in the morning to follow the corps, only got as far as Sougé.

General von Schmidt was sent to the right, to establish communications with the IIIrd Corps. He was met at Vancé by a brisk fire. The squadron which led the van made way for the horse battery, and a volley of grape-shot drove the dismounted Cuirassiers behind the hedges for shelter. When two more guns could be got into position, a few rounds of canister dispersed a long column of French cavalry in every direction.

Colonel von Alvensleben pursued the French cavalry with the 15th Regiment of Uhlans till they came upon a body of infantry guarding the stream

of Etang-fort. The brigade stayed at Vancé, after putting about 100 French out of action.

Of the IIIrd Corps the 6th Division had gone forward by St.-Calais. The French tried to line the trenches on greatly cut-up roads; but they did not await a serious attack, and made off, for the most part in carts which were in waiting. The 5th Division, proceeding in a parallel line on the left, met with no opposition; but the state of the roads made the march very difficult. The corps halted at Bouloire. The 9th, coming up behind them, entered St.-Calais.

The Grand Duke had moved both Divisions of the XIIIth Corps on La-Ferté-Bernard. On their way they came across none but stragglers, but they found the roads in such a state that not till four in the afternoon did they reach the town and settle into quarters. The French had retired to Connerré. The 4th Cavalry Division was to secure the right flank on the further advance, but could not get as far as Bellême; on the other hand, General von Rauch's detachment, despatched to Montmirail, surprised the French in Vibraye, and took possession of the bridge there over the Braye.

By the evening of that day the forces forming the German right and left wings were at an equal distance from Le-Mans, on the single high road

which leads across from La-Ferté-Bernard by St.-Calais and La-Chartre; the IIIrd Corps was further in advance, with an interval of a long march. A closer combination of the forces could only be assured by a further advance along the converging highways. Prince Frederick Charles therefore issued an order, at ten o'clock that evening, for the Xth Corps to march next day to Parigné-l'Evêque, the IIIrd to Ardenay, and the XIIIth as far ahead as Montfort, each sending an advanced guard beyond those points. The IXth was to follow in the centre, while General von Hartmann was to protect Vendôme with the 38th Brigade and the 1st Division of Cavalry.

But the mere distance was too great to allow of the wings being brought so rapidly to the points designated; and on the 9th of January snow-storms, ice-bound roads, and a thick fog still further impeded their progress.

January 9th.—General von Hartmann marched his infantry brigade on Château Renault, and entered the town by one o'clock. Curten's Division (French) had started early in the day for St.-Laurent.

The Xth Corps, though incomplete, retreated this day, in two columns; General von Woyna's detachment was to march from Pont-de-Braye by

Vancé, the remainder of the corps from La Chartre *viâ* Brives, to meet at Grand-Lucé.

The 20th Division had scarcely set out, by this route, from L'Homme, when they came under a sharp fire of shell and bullets. In this place there happened, for once, to be room for three batteries to advance, but in the heavy snow-fall aim was out of the question. The German infantry, however, by degrees drove the French out of various hamlets and farmsteads, and back across the Brives. To pursue them beyond that stream a bridge must have been thrown across, with some loss of time, and then Chahaignes would have had to be seized.

But in the narrow valley which lay before them they expected some rather hot work. The nature of the road was such that the artillerymen and cavalry had to dismount and lead the horses. The General in command rode on a gun-carriage; his staff went on foot. Some horses which had fallen in front stopped the way for the column; the artillery were then sent back to try next day to come on by the Vancé road.

To facilitate the march of the 20th Division, General von Woyna had been instructed to deviate from his direct road and attack the enemy's left. When he approached the hollow, there was no sound of fighting there, and the detachment was

turned back at Vancé; but at Brives, at about half-past three, the main column met with fresh resistance, being received with a brisk fire from the heights north-east of the village. Not even the infantry could move beyond the high road, so there was no alternative; they must march straight on. Meanwhile, however, the 30th Brigade came up and drove off the enemy.

It was half-past six in the evening, and quite dark, when Colonel von Valentini set out for St.-Pierre with four battalions, and there took 100 French prisoners and a loaded baggage train of 100 waggons.

The Xth Corps spent the night with its van as far forward as Brives and Vancé, but its rear straggled as far back as the valley of the Loir. Nor had the 14th Brigade of Cavalry been able to make any headway.

Of the IIIrd Corps the 6th Division had proceeded by the high road, beyond Bouloire, with the artillery corps; the 5th had moved on, on the left, by cross roads.

The advanced guard of the IIIrd Corps, after a smart brush, had expelled the French from a position in front of Ardenay, but at two o'clock had to repel a determined attack there. After General de Jouffroy had withdrawn to the south of St.-Calais, General Chanzy had pushed the

Division under Paris forward from thence towards Le-Mans. He had taken up a position near Ardenay, occupying the château on the right, and placing four guns and two mitrailleuses on the left close to La-Butte. To oppose these there was only room on the road for two German field-pieces, which, however, in the course of half an hour had silenced the mitrailleuses, and then carried on the unequal contest with the greatest obstinacy. At about four o'clock five companies of the 12th Brigade stormed the château, while others, crossing the meadow-land to the right, forced their way through a clump of trees to La-Butte. As night came on the French tried to effect a general attack along the high road; but this was repulsed, and the Brandenburgers, defying the steady firing of the defenders, took La-Butte and Ardenay with a rush and loud cheers, without firing a shot. The French were driven back into the valley of the Narais, losing many prisoners.

On the right a detachment, consisting of one battalion, two squadrons, and two guns, had advanced with the 6th Division. They drove before them numbers of Franc-tireurs, but at La-Belle-Inutile they met with more serious resistance. The post had already been carried by the 24th, who possessed themselves of a large ammunition and provision train, and took above 100 unwounded

prisoners. Count zu Lynar then prepared the village for defence.

The 5th Division had met with no opposition, but the state of the roads had seriously delayed its progress. It was not till the afternoon that the head reached the Narais at Gué dé l'Aune and took up quarters there and to the rear as far as St. Mars de Locquenay. The advanced guard went on, however, to La Buzardière, thus forming the van of the whole army; Parigné-l'Evêque, on their left flank, was in the hands of the French.

The IXth Corps had followed the IIIrd to Bouloire.

No orders from head-quarters had as yet reached La-Ferté when, at nine in the morning, the Grand Duke marched on Connerré with the XIIIth Corps. Soon after midday the 17th Division came upon the French near Sceaux, and after an obstinate struggle, advancing all the time, drove them first out of the villages and then off the road. The French, who had retreated to Connerré by forced night marches, lost above 500 prisoners in this small affair. But the short day was closing in and the advanced guard halted at dusk at Duneau. A detachment, on going further, found Connerré occupied by the French, and many watch-fires were blazing in the valley of the Due. The main

force of the German infantry found quarters in and around Sceaux.

Rauch's detachment, being ordered to rejoin the Corps, took possession of Le-Croset, and of the bridge over the Due near that village, and then expelled the French from Thorigné.

The French stayed in Connerré only till the evening; then, leaving a company in occupation, they continued their retreat. This inevitably led them from the left bank of the Huisne through the quarters taken up by the IIIrd German Corps, who were disturbed all night by wandering detachments of French soldiers, even at Nuillé, where the head-quarters of the Division were established.

On the extreme German right the 4th Division of Cavalry had occupied Bellême, after driving out the French battalion, which had likewise been ordered thither.

By this day the centre of the IInd Army Corps had also got within two miles of Le-Mans, fighting all the way; while the two wings were still at some distance behind. As it was probable that the French would give battle in some strong position beyond the Huisne, it seemed advisable to await the arrival of the Xth and XIIIth Corps; on the other hand, this was giving the French time to collect their forces also. By attacking at once, two of their Divisions, now at Château-Renault

and Le-Chartre, could scarcely be brought up quickly enough, and the rest of their army, now concentrating on Le-Mans, were involved in fighting at a disadvantage on all sides. Prince Frederick Charles therefore sent the IIIrd Corps to scour the country beyond Ardenay; the Xth was to advance on Parigné, and the XIIIth on St. Mars-la-Bruyère, though that place could scarcely be reached from the positions actually occupied by the corps that night.

As we have seen, the army assembled near Le-Mans was still acting on the offensive on January 6th; General Jouffroy advancing on Vendôme, and Curten on St.-Amand. But on the 7th the French found their whole front, ten miles in length, reduced to the defensive. General Rousseau, on the left wing, had evacuated Nogent-le-Rotrou, and, without being hardly pressed, began his retreat by a night march to Connerré. In the centre, the crossing of the Braye was wrested from General Jouffroy; he retired from St.-Calais, not on Le-Mans, but to join General Barry to the south. On the right, General de Curten abandoned Château-Renault, and set out, unpursued, on the road past Château-du-Loir. To bring about some concerted movement of the three Divisions of his right wing, General Chanzy placed them under the superior orders of Admiral

Jauréguiberry; he sent the Paris Division on to Ardenay by the road General Jouffroy had abandoned, and reinforced General Rousseau on the left, by ordering three Divisions to support him on either side of his line of retreat. General Jouffroy was to return to Parigné-l'Evêque, and a Division was sent to meet him there and at Changé.

General de Curten succeeded on the 9th in checking the progress of the left German wing for some time close to Chahaignes; but Paris's Division was driven back on Ardenay, and General Rousseau, thus surrounded, abandoned Connerré the same evening. The two Divisions of the right wing withdrew to Jupilles and Nuillé-Pont-Pierre.

Under these circumstances General Chanzy's commands were that on the 10th Jouffroy's Divisions should fall back on Parigné-l'Evêque, and the Paris Division march once more towards Ardenay. He sent the remaining three Divisions of the XXIst Corps to meet General Rousseau, with instructions to retake Connerré and Thorigné.

These intended attacks on both sides gave rise to the fierce battle which, on the German side, was fought by the IIIrd Corps single-handed.

BATTLE OF LE-MANS.

(10th, 11th, and 12th of January.)

January 10th.—The fight at Parigné and Changé. As, owing to the nature of the country, deep columns could not deploy without great loss of time, General von Alvensleben advanced on a wider front of small subdivisions, moving with intervals in front of and between Gué-de-l'Aune and Ardenay, with the 9th and 11th Infantry Brigades next to Changé. On his right the 12th marched along the high road to Le-Mans; on his left the 10th were to start from Volnay if Parigné were found abandoned by the French, and leaving that place on their left, were also to make for Changé.

Parigné had, in fact, been deserted by the French, but had been reoccupied before daybreak by Deplanque's Division; and before the German troops had started, the far-advanced posts, towards the wood of Loudon, were smartly attacked by the French. The greater part of the 9th Brigade had to be brought up by degrees between Blinières and the edge of the wood, but only seven guns could be brought into play against the strong French artillery. General von Stülpnagel decided to reserve his strength for the struggle at Changé, and not to carry on a sustained contest here,

which must be decided as soon as the 10th Brigade on the left should make its appearance.

This brigade, delayed by the difficulties of the march, did not reach Challes till noon; but it brought two batteries to strengthen the German artillery, which now cleared the way for the infantry attack on Parigné, which stood on high ground. In half an hour the battalions rushed on the place with shouts of "Hurrah for Brandenburg!" taking a gun which the enemy had abandoned, and two mitrailleuses still being served. When the French returned to try to recover them they were repulsed, and lost another field-piece, two colours and several waggons. After losing 2150 prisoners they fled to the shelter of the forest of Ruaudin. To keep a watch here, General von Stülpnagel left two battalions at Parigné, and proceeded at once to Changé in two columns. In front of this village, at about three o'clock, the 11th Brigade had met with a violent resistance by the Gué-Perray, from the other brigades of Deplanque's Division. The 35th Regiment of the 2nd Battalion lost nine officers and above 100 men in a severe struggle at Les-Gars. The General in command, who was on the spot, dislodged both flanks of the enemy from strong positions, and on the left two companies succeeded in crossing the stream at La Goudrière.

These at four o'clock came into contact with the advanced guard of the 9th Brigade, which Colonel Count von der Groeben had brought on from Parigné, taking possession of the Château of Girardrie on the way. As the two companies of the 11th Brigade sent up to the right reached Auvigné at the same time, the "General Advance" was sounded. Auvigné was stormed, the bridge north of Gué-la-Hart was crossed, and that village taken after a hard fight. About 1000 prisoners were again taken from the flying French.

It was already dark, and Changé, the goal of the struggle, was not yet won. But when a barricade outside the village had been demolished it was found that the 10th Brigade was already in possession. This brigade, on its way along the high road from Parigné, had met with resistance both at Chef-Raison and Paillerie. Having only two guns, they failed to silence the French artillery, but General von Stülpnagel left a battalion here too, to watch the enemy, and hurried forward with part of the brigade to support the Germans at Gué-la-Hart; the rest were to attack Changé.

Here the French had already been for the most part dismissed to quarters, but they soon formed and offered a determined resistance. There was a long and fierce street-fight, which ended in about an hour's time, by the whole garrison of 800 men,

who had crowded into the market-place, surrendering as prisoners.

The 12th Brigade had at last got off from Ardenay, but not till eleven o'clock; they proceeded unchecked along the high road as far as St.-Hubert, where they seized an abandoned commissariat train. Having aligned themselves with the rest of their corps they halted for a while, but soon after they were attacked by French artillery; and the enemy again advancing along the highway, General von Buddenbrock likewise advanced to the attack, and drove the French out of Champagné, some across the Huisne, and some back on the hills behind the village. Two guns then successfully defied the fire of the French artillery near Lune-d'Auvours, and the infantry expelled them from that shelter also.

Further to the right a German battalion had taken St.-Mars-la-Bruyère after a slight skirmish, and was subsequently joined there by General Count zu Lynar.

Thus the IIIrd Corps had by this time taken more than 5000 prisoners and many valuable trophies, by equal skill and good fortune; it had indeed left 450 men for dead.

The Xth Corps had started that same day from Vancé and Brives, and had reached Grand-Lucé, but not till two o'clock, unobstructed by the

French, but along very heavy roads. Here they took up their quarters.

The IXth Corps remained at Nuillé.

Of the XIIIth Corps, the 17th Division had continued its advance along the left bank of the Huisne, and had found Connerré already deserted by the French. But on the further side of the river, the heights of Cohernières, the railway station and the wood on the north, were occupied by the 2nd Division of the French XXIst Corps. General von Rauch led two battalions to attack them from the south, while from the east the 22nd Division was brought up, having crossed the Huisne at Sceaux and gone on to Beillé along the right bank. The French made a stout resistance, and the fight lasted with varying fortunes till darkness came on. The Château of Couléon and several villages at the foot of the wooded hills were taken by the Germans, but the French maintained their hold on the heights and their position at Cohernières.

The 17th Division had meanwhile continued its advance, along roads frozen till they were as smooth as glass, and reached La-Belle-Inutile; the 22nd passed the night at Beillé.

This division had that morning sent a detachment to Bonnétable, whither the 4th Cavalry Division had already proceeded. The 12th

Cavalry Brigade followed as far as Bellême. Colonel von Beckedorff then marched forward to Chanteloup, whence he drove out the French in spite of an obstinate defence.

General Chanzy had resolved on a decisive engagement before Le-Mans. Curten's Division had not yet arrived, and only a part of Barry's had come up, still the army from the camp at Coulie amounted to 10,000 men. The right wing of the French position rested on the Sarthe; the centre extended above a mile along the Chemin-aux-Bœufs, and the left, making a slight bend, rested on the Huisne. Barry's Division, already weakened by reverses, and General Lalande's National Guards—an ill-disciplined and ill-armed troop—were placed on the right where the danger was least. Deplanque's and Roquebrune's Divisions, with Desmaison's Brigade and Jouffroy's Division, held the centre and the left, Jouffroy facing General von Alvensleben. Behind this line Bouëdec's Division and Colonel Marty's troops were placed in reserve. These 50,000 to 60,000 men under Admiral Jauréguiberry, very sufficiently defended the position between the two rivers, which was well protected by earth-works at the most important points. Five other Divisions, under the command of General de Colomb, stood on the other side of the river, about two

miles distant, the Paris Division at Yvré; Gougeard's still occupying the heights of Auvours to the north of Champagné, Rousseau's at Montfort and Pont-de-Gesnes, Collin's in a bow-shaped position at Lombron, while Villeneuve's, quite on the flank, faced Chanteloup.

January 11th.—On this day the IIIrd German Army Corps was standing exactly opposite the main body of the French forces. It could not for the present hope for any support from the corps on its wing, and had a hard struggle before it.

On the left, the Xth Corps was still at Grand Lucé that morning, and on the right the XIIIth Corps had been detained on the previous day by the obstinate resistance of the French, who had held their own between Les-Cohernières and La-Chapelle, and occupied Le-Chêne in their front.

The 22nd Division had been thrown into great confusion in the course of the struggle in the wood, and it was not till they had been reformed and the enemy's position had been reconnoitred by both the Generals of Division that the fighting could be renewed, at about eleven o'clock.

Two battalions of the 17th Division and one battery had been left in a post of observation in front of Pont-de-Gesnes, on the southern bank of the Huisnes; on the northern side, the Mecklenburg battalions stormed Cohernières in the after-

noon, and after a sharp contest, in conjunction with the Hessians forced their way to the westward as far as the Gué and on towards Lombron at about four o'clock.

Further to the right, two companies of the 90th Regiment of the 22nd Division had meanwhile taken Le Chêne, in spite of a stout defence; the 83rd Regiment, after a sharp fire from the guns, had taken the farms of Flouret and La Grande Métairie. Colonel von Beckedorff, on being relieved at Chanteloup by the 4th Division of Cavalry, had driven the French out of St.-Célerin and advanced to La-Chapelle-St.-Rémy, to the right of the division, which occupied a large extent of ground behind the points it had seized.

The Mecklenburg Grenadiers had held their own for a long time at Le-Gué and La-Brosse against superior numbers attacking from Pont-de-Gesnes; and the main body of the 17th Division retired that evening on Connerré.

But the more completely General von Alvensleben was thrown on his own resources the more important it seemed to keep the troops in close connection. A strong force of the enemy was on his flank, nay, almost in his rear, on the hills of Auvours, and only kept at bay by the 12th Brigade, which, being thus engaged, could not at present advance to his assistance.

And it was there that the battle began. The French had repossessed themselves of Champagné, and their artillery formed line under cover of the ridge. When their fire had been somewhat checked by four of the German guns, two battalions advanced to the attack. It was not till eleven o'clock, after an obstinate contest, that the French were driven back to the heights, and the bridge over the Huisne was taken. General von Buddenbrock now placed two battalions in a post of observation, sent a third to Lune-d'Auvours, and by noon returned with the rest of the brigade to rejoin the corps.

Meanwhile the conflict had been raging with such fury all along the front that at twelve o'clock Prince Frederick Charles sent orders from St.-Hubert to General Voigts-Rhetz, to proceed with all speed to the field with the Xth Corps; and at the same time General von Manstein was instructed to seize the heights of Auvours with the IXth.

It was one o'clock before the advanced guard of the IXth marched up the hollow way through deep snow-drifts. They were followed by two battalions of the 12th Brigade, bringing up two batteries with the greatest difficulty. The German infantry plunged into the wood, which was full of French soldiers, in the direction of Villiers; the 11th Regiment of Fusiliers seized three mitrail-

leuses that were being served, and as soon as the French had abandoned the position, turned them on the wood.

Further to the left, at about three o'clock, two battalions of the 85th Regiment were detached from the main body of the 18th Division, to proceed to the western end of the ridge, supported by the Jägers and two batteries which were posted at Les-Hêtres. To protect them, two companies moved on to La-Lune, hindering the French from crowding down on the high road. But in opposition to this movement the French opened a severe fire from their elevated batteries behind Yvré; notwithstanding this, the Holsteiners on the left rushed on a French battery and seized three of its guns. On the right they took possession of a neighbouring farmstead; and soon after five the French had vanished from the high ground to the western ridge.

Here, however, a strong counter-attack had to be met that same evening, for part of Gougeard's Division marched up the slope from Yvré. Their further advance was effectually stopped; but they could not be prevented from remaining there for the evening and night. Still, by this struggle the 18th Division had kept open the rear and flank of the IIIrd Corps. It was again required that evening to secure the crossing of the Huisne during

the night for use next day; so three battalions and one battery went down to the northern bank and repulsed the French troops in possession of the bridge. The division had lost 275 men.

General von Alvensleben had postponed the advance of the IIIrd Corps till eleven o'clock, hoping for the arrival of the 12th Brigade.

During the night the French completed the works on the skirts of the wood and took up a position there; they also occupied the high bank on the opposite side of the river, where they had brought up several batteries. Thus a direct attack would involve heavy loss, and it was impossible to out-flank such extensive lines. General von Alvensleben therefore decided on advancing at first only against the enemy's left wing, and sent forward the 11th Brigade. The 10th and 9th remained in reserve for the present, at Changé and Gué-la-Hart. The 12th, released at Mont-Auvours, were also advancing, but by a circuitous route, because the high road was everywhere commanded by the batteries above.

The 11th Brigade, scarcely 3000 strong, followed the course of the Gué-Perray streamlet, round the northern end of the wood. To protect it against the French columns which threatened it from the heights, the 35th Regiment formed line on the brook and occupied the Château of Les-Arches.

The 20th tried to get forward by the cattle-path, and while holding the Château of Les-Noyers and the bridge there over the Huisnes, drove off the French by sheer hard fighting, as far as Les-Granges. But they presently returned with so strong a force that the whole brigade was gradually brought up into the firing line. Les-Granges was lost and retaken several times with heavy loss, particularly of officers; but the Brandenburgers fought steadily on.

On their left the 10th Brigade now made its appearance, having come up from Changé at one o'clock. By two, the 52nd Regiment had possession of the farm of Le-Pavillon, of the wooded slope in front and the farm of Grand-Anneau, but their loss was severe. Strong columns of the French coming up from Pontlieue were driven back, two batteries were got forward under heavy fire from the Chassepots to within 800 paces of Le Tertre, and yet the 12th Regiment did not succeed in getting into the farmstead till two battalions of the 9th Brigade had come to their assistance from Changé. The position was taken by storm at about five o'clock, with the help of the 8th Regiment of the Grenadier Life Guards. The 52nd Regiment, having spent all its ammunition, had to be taken out of action, but the battalion of Grenadiers rushed down on the cattle-path, taking

two French guns which were firing on them, after a desperate conflict; but the enemy's repeated attempts to recover them were steadily frustrated. A battery which the French were bringing up on the western side of the wood was driven back by rapid volleys.

When it was found that the 35th Regiment must be brought back from the Gué-Perray to support the 20th, the French recovered possession of Les-Arches. Here the 12th Brigade had arrived from Auvours at two o'clock, only three battalions strong; the 64th, however, recaptured the château after a short fight. The overwhelming storm of fire from the artillery and musketry on the opposite side of the river hindered the Germans from getting up their guns, and it was only with great difficulty and the loss of many gunners that the pieces were brought away again; but every attack on the position by the French from Yvré was steadily repulsed.

It was now quite dark, but the firing had not ceased. The IIIrd Corps had taken 600 prisoners, but had lost 500 killed. It had fought its way into the heart of the French position, and its outposts were in close proximity to the enemy's front. And now, though late, strong reinforcements arrived.

The Xth Corps had moved from Grand-Lucé to

the westward early in the day, to block the high road from Tours to Le-Mans, but the frozen state of the ground again delayed it on the way, so that it only reached Teloche in the afternoon.

The sound of firing to the northward left it in no doubt that General von Alvensleben was fighting a great battle. The orders sent from headquarters at St.-Hubert reached General Voigts-Rhetz at noon; but he then judged, and very rightly, that his assistance would now be more effective on the enemy's flank than on the field where the IIIrd Corps was engaged. So in spite of the exhausted state of his men, who had had no hot meal on the way, he at once pushed forward.

To protect himself against Curten's Division, probably at Château-du-Loir, he despatched one battalion to Ecommoy. It was received with firing from the houses, surrounded in the darkness, and compelled to withdraw from the place; but it kept the road clear in the rear of the corps.

The head of the 20th Division found Mulsanne feebly defended, and drove the detachment back beyond the cutting of La-Monnerie.

The nature of the country here afforded great advantages to the French. Ditches and fences were good cover for firing from, farmsteads and copses excellent positions for defence. Only eight

guns could be brought to bear against the enemy's artillery; but nevertheless four battalions (Westphalians and Brunswickers) persistently repelled the French, and by night-fall had got as far as Point-du-Jour. The conflict only ceased at the cattle-path by Les-Mortes-Aures. Here the French held the whole plain before them, by the continuous running fire, kept up from behind lines of shelter-trenches rising one above the other.

The battle wavered for a long time, but the German left presently gained ground. The 1st Battalion of the 17th Regiment rushed on the enemy, who returned their fire at the shortest possible range, and then made for the wood; and when the drums of the 1st Battalion of the 56th Regiment were heard at Point-du-Jour, beating the charge, the French carried away their mitrailleuses and evacuated Les-Mortes-Aures.

This battalion had received orders to end the struggle at the point of the bayonet. Captain von Monbart led the attack at the double in close order; all the companies at hand joined in it, and in spite of a steady fire from the cover of the wood, La-Tuilerie was carried by half-past eight; and here the brigade re-formed, while the 37th stood ready to support it at a spot beyond at Mulsanne. The French vanished in the darkness. The constant roll of wheels, the noise of de-

parting railway trains and a confusion of cries announced their flight. Still the prisoners, who were brought in in numbers, all agreed that a strong force was encamped in the woods. Watch-fires blazed there through the night, and instead of resting, the troops must have been preparing to meet a fresh attack. By about half-past ten the outposts reported the approach of a strong force of the French from Pontlieue.

Hitherto the Germans had only had to deal with National Guards under General Lalande at this point, a force not much to be relied on; but the Admiral now sent Bouëdec's Division against La-Tuilerie, with General Roquebrune's to support their advance.

The battalions in the first lines were under fire for above an hour in a perfect storm of projectiles, but no serious attack was attempted.

According to French reports, their officers strove in vain to induce their troops to advance; they constantly gave way. And a subsequent effort with the Garde-Mobile was equally fruitless.

Still, there was to be no rest. At two in the morning the din of fighting again made itself heard on the right. Deplanque's Division had been disturbed by a flanking force of the 40th Brigade, who had been marching along the road

from Ruaudin to Pontlieue, to be at hand in case of need; without returning the enemy's fire, they had attacked the detachment holding Epinettes and took possession of it, close to the cattle-path.

January 12th.—Only the IIIrd and Xth Corps could be reckoned on for the inevitable battle next day. The other two could only afford indirect assistance by keeping part of the French forces otherwise engaged.

Of the XIIIth Corps the 17th Division was to proceed *viâ* Lombron to St.-Corneille, without allowing themselves to be drawn into a fray with the enemy still occupying the banks of the Huisne; the 22nd was ordered from La-Chapelle to Savigné. The little river Gué could easily be held, and part of the artillery was left at Connerré with the 7th Brigade of Cavalry.

In their advance the Germans found that the enemy had already abandoned Lombron, Pont-de-Gesnes, and Montfort. Scattered arms and equipment betrayed how hastily they had fled.

Several stragglers were brought in, and it was not till reaching the Merdereau, at about noon, that the 17th Brigade met with any opposition. An attack from all sides dislodged the French from the Château of Hyre and from St.-Corneille at about four o'clock, and 500 French were taken

prisoners. They were then driven back behind the Parance, where the advanced guard halted at dusk.

Colonel von Beckedorff's detachment of the 22nd Division had marched on Chanteloup from Sillé, repulsing the French on La-Croix, where a large body of their troops made a stand. But when, after a long delay, the main body of the division arrived, the Germans attacked at once. Whole regiments of French here laid down their arms, and 3000 men surrendered, with several officers.

An attempt of the German cavalry to get across the Sarthe to break up the railway communication was, however, unsuccessful.

The force occupying the ridge of Auvours had surrendered in a body. The 35th Brigade marched up to Villiers, but patrols sent ahead brought news that the French had retired behind the Huisne.

When the noise of fighting at St.-Corneille was heard at mid-day, the brigade was ordered to proceed northward to support the 17th Division engaged there. The 84th Regiment, passing by La-Commune, lent valuable assistance in the attack on Château-Hyre. Outposts were left by the Parance for the night, but the main body of the brigade returned to Fatines, and the

36th took up quarters between Villiers and St.-Mars-la-Bruyère.

By the battle of the previous day the French position before Le-Mans had been forced; but they still stood firm behind the Huisnes, and as their left wing had been driven back on their centre, that point had been considerably strengthened. Still, the stream must be crossed, the steep slope must be climbed, where every hedge of the terraced vineyards was held by strong firing lines, and where the heights were crowned with batteries. The ford by Yvré, on the left, was very strongly protected, and the ground in front of the wood of Pontlieue had been made impassable in many places by abattis. Against such a position the artillery could do little, and the cavalry nothing, while deep snow hampered every movement of the infantry. General von Alvensleben therefore decided for the present on acting only on the defensive with his right wing, while with his left he prepared to support General von Voigts-Rhetz in his advance.

The troops were roused from their short rest at six in the morning. Two companies of French were making their way towards the bridge at Château-Les-Noyers with powder-bags, but they were compelled to retreat, leaving the explosives behind them. At about eight o'clock the French

made a determined attack on the outposts of the 12th Regiment, quartered in the wood, and drove them in as far back as Le-Tertre. Again the fight raged furiously round this farmstead, which was almost demolished by shell. One by one the last battalions of the 10th Brigade were drawn into the struggle, whilst detachments whose ammunition was exhausted were ordered out of it. Only four guns could fire with any effect, but by eleven o'clock the French volleys gradually died away, and they were seen to retire on Pontlieue. The battalions of the left wing pursued, and came out on the Parigné road in immediate touch with the Xth Corps.

General von Voigts-Rhetz had left two battalions at Mulsanne, for protection from Ecommoy; the whole Corps, after many unavoidable detachments had been detailed from it, was assembled by about half-past seven to march forward on Pontlieue. The main body of the 20th Division was to diverge along the Mulsanne road to go to La-Tuilerie. Three battalions of the 19th Division were to meet at Ruaudin to strengthen the detachment occupying Epinettes, while two battalions and the 14th Cavalry Brigade took the road to Parigné, with the Corps' artillery, which could be of no service in the plain further to the left.

Reinforcements had meanwhile arrived at Ruau-

din, and General von Woyna made his way without hindrance through the woods to La-Source, where he halted at one o'clock, having formed line on the 20th Division. These had already brought a heavy battery into action, driving back the French mitrailleuses beyond Pontlieue. On the right, a light battery of the 19th Division was brought up to La-Source, and ten horse-artillery guns as far as the Parigné road. The atmosphere was, however, so thick that their fire could only be directed by the map.

At two o'clock General von Kraatz advanced in close column on Pontlieue, whither General von Woyna was now also marching. The southern side of the village was taken after a short struggle; but on the further side of the Huisne the French held the houses along the river-bank, and just as the Germans had reached the bridge it was blown up. The demolition, however, was not complete, and the foremost battalions got across over the débris to get at the enemy. Two made their way down the high street, one turned to the left, to the railway station, whence came the sound of signals for departing trains. There was nothing to hinder the iron railway-bridge from being blown up, and by this means many prisoners were taken, besides 150 provision waggons and 1000 hundredweight of flour.

The artillery were next directed to fire on the town of Le-Mans.

Meanwhile the detachments which had become mixed up in the fight in the wood had reformed, and joined the IIIrd Corps. After a ration of meat, the first for three days, had been served out to all the troops, the 10th Brigade resumed its march. The battalion of Brandenburg Jägers crossed the river by the paper-mill of L'Epau, and two batteries at Château-Funay contributed to the firing on Le Mans.

When, soon after, the infantry entered the town, a fierce struggle began in the streets, blocked as they were by the baggage-trains of the French. Access to the houses had to be cleared by artillery; a large number of French were taken prisoners, and a vast quantity of supplies seized. The fighting went on till nightfall, and then the Xth Corps and half of the IIIrd took up alarm quarters in the town. The 6th Division took possession of Yvré, which the enemy had abandoned, and placed outposts at Les-Noyers and Les-Arches on the further side of the Huisne.

The actions fought by the French on this day, had been arranged for the sole purpose of giving the army time to set out.

On learning from Admiral Jauréguiberry that every effort to get the troops to advance had

failed, and that the last reserves were shattered, General Chanzy had, at eight that morning, issued orders for a general retreat on Alençon. Here the Minister of War had arranged for the simultaneous arrival of two Divisions of the XIXth Corps from Carentan.

The march of the IInd Army on Le-Mans had been a series of seven days' incessant fighting. It had fallen at a season when the winter was most severe. Smooth ice and snow-drifts had hampered every movement. Bivouacking was out of the question; the troops had to seek their night quarters often at a distance of some miles in their rear; their reassembling in the morning wasted precious hours, and then the shortness of the day prevented their taking full advantage of their successes. Whole battalions were employed merely in guarding the prisoners. The roads were in such a state that baggage could not be brought up; officers and men alike marched in insufficient clothing and on reduced rations. But spirit, endurance and discipline had conquered every difficulty.

The Germans had sacrificed in this prolonged struggle 3200 men and 200 officers, the larger half belonging to the IIIrd Corps alone. Several companies fought under the command of non-commissioned officers.

The French estimated their losses at 6200 men, and 20,000 taken prisoners; seventeen guns, two colours, and an abundant supply of matériel remained as trophies in the hands of the victors.

After such severe efforts the troops imperatively needed some rest. The orders from head-quarters were that the operations were not to be extended beyond a certain area of country; and the IInd Army might almost immediately be required on the Seine and the Loire. Prince Frederick Charles therefore determined to follow up the retreating enemy with only a small force.

On the French side, if each Corps was to have an independent road for escape to Alençon, two Corps must necessarily start to the westward. And on the evening of the last day's fight the XVIth Corps had reached Chauffour on the Laval road, and the XVIIth was at Mayenne on the way to Conlie, each protected by its rear-guard. The XXIst was assembled at Ballon, to the east of the Sarthe. From these points all were to march northwards. General Chanzy still deluded himself with the hope of getting on by Evreux to the assistance of the besieged capital. He would have, indeed, to make a wide circuit—a bow to which the Germans could easily have formed the string in a much shorter time; and in the condition in which his troops now were, across a country where all

arms could be brought into action, they must have been annihilated. In short, the conquered army was already driven to the west of the Sarthe.

After distributing rations to men and horses, General von Schmidt set forth at midday on the 13th with four battalions, eleven squadrons, and ten guns, and reached Chauffour after some skirmishing. The XIIIth Corps (German) advanced to the Sarthe, the 17th Division sending their outposts across the river at Neuville, and the 22nd driving the French out of Ballon, whence they retired completely routed to Beaumont. The XXIst Corps (French) had taken up quarters this day at Sillé. The National Guards from Brittany fled wildly to Coron, and thence back into their own province. They were joined by the troops left in camp at Conlie, after they had plundered the camp. The XVIIth Corps also went off, without halting by the Vègre, as they had been ordered to do, but marching straight on to Ste.-Suzanne. The XVIth withdrew on Laval, leaving Barry's Division at Chassillé to protect their rear. Numbers of abandoned baggage-waggons, and cast-away arms, testified to the condition of the defeated army.

On the 14th the French were driven out of Chassillé. The XVIth Corps was by this time in dire confusion; it retired during the night to St.-Jean-sur-Erve. In the camp at Conlie 8000

rifles had been abandoned with 5,000,000 cartridges, and various other warlike stores.

The Grand Duke had marched on Alençon along the right bank of the Sarthe. The French advanced guard of the 22nd Division made a slight stand at Beaumont and lost 1400 prisoners.

On the following day General von Schmidt made further progress on the road to Laval, but he found that the French had concentrated at St.-Jean and had posted a strong force of artillery on the heights beyond the Erve. The Oldenburg Regiment forced its way as far as the church of the little town, and the Brunswickers drove the enemy back on Ste.-Suzanne, higher up the river, but there the pursuit ended.

Although Barry's and Deplanque's Divisions had now no more than 6000 fighting men, by the French estimate, and Curten's Division had not yet come up, the German force at hand was very considerably inferior. The rest of the Xth Corps was moving up to their support, but had as yet only reached Chasillé. A battalion proceeding from Conlie came into conflict at Sillé with the XXIst Corps (French) assembled there, and sustained heavy loss. The 22nd Division of the XIIIth Corps also met with serious opposition before reaching Alençon, from the National Guards

and Volunteers under Lipowski; so the attack on the town was postponed till next day.

But on the following morning the French position in Alençon was evacuated, as well as Sillé and St.-Jean. The places were at once occupied by the Germans, and General von Schmidt marched on, close to Laval. Numerous stragglers from the retreating army were taken prisoners.

Curten's Division had now reached the western bank of the Mayenne, and there the remnants of the Army of the Loire re-assembled. Reduced to half its original strength, and very greatly demoralized, it would be *hors de combat* for some time to come, and the object of the German march on Le-Mans was fully attained.

To the north of Paris, however, the French were again preparing to attack. It was needful to withdraw those Divisions of the Ist which were still on the Lower Seine, in the direction of the Somme; and orders came from head-quarters that the XIIIth Corps of the IInd Army should march on Rouen. On the Upper Loire two French detachments had been sent to attack the Hessians holding positions about Briare, and had driven them back, on the 14th, to Ouzouer; while from Sologne came a report of the advance of a newly-constituted French Army Corps—the XXVth.

The German IXth Corps, after evacuating and

razing the camp at Conlie, was therefore sent to reinforce Orleans. The remainder of the IInd Army, the IIIrd and Xth Corps with the three cavalry divisions—about 27,000 foot, 9000 horse, and 186 guns—were assembled under Prince Frederick Charles round Le-Mans. The cavalry, placed as a corps of observation in the front and on the flanks, had several small skirmishes, but no further serious hostilities were attempted.

The 4th Cavalry Division held Alençon on the right, and on the left General von Hartmann entered Tours without any opposition.

OPERATIONS ON THE NORTH OF PARIS DURING JANUARY.

At the beginning of the New Year a considerable part of the Ist Army (German) was engaged in investing Péronne, which would have afforded a safe passage for the debouching of the French over to the southern bank of the Somme. General Barnekow had laid siege to the little town with the 3rd Reserve Division and the 31st Brigade of Infantry. Hitherto it had only been kept under observation by cavalry, but recent circumstances had raised it to importance. So much of the VIIIth Corps as was available on the Somme formed, for

the protection of the besiegers on the north, a wide curve from Amiens as far as Bapaume.

The Ist Corps, posted at Rouen, at first consisted only of three brigades; but the IVth was on the march from Péronne, where it had now been relieved. No reinforcement of the Ist Army had been effected; the 14th Division, after reducing Mézières and taking Rocroy, had received fresh orders from Versailles which transferred it to another field of action.

General Faidherbe had concentrated his troops from the rest-camp south of Arras, behind the Scarpe, and had begun his forward march on January 2nd. He advanced with the XXIInd Corps to the relief of Péronne through Bucquoy. The XXIIIrd followed by the high road to Bapaume. As early as half-past ten the Derroja Division of the former Corps obliged the 3rd Cavalry Division, as well as those battalions of the 32nd Brigade which had been attached to it, to retire on Miraumont, pursuing it, however, only as far as Achiet-le-Petit.

The other Division, under General Bessol, had only advanced towards Achiét-le-Grand in the afternoon. There he was opposed for several hours to two companies of the 68th, a detachment of Hussars, and two guns, who retired towards evening on Avesnes. The French did not pursue, but established outposts at Bihucourt.

Payen's Division had deployed at Béhagnies, on the high road, and its batteries opened fire on Sapignies, where, however, General von Strubberg had posted five battalions. These met the attack, and at two o'clock entered Béhagnies with a rush, took 240 prisoners, and prepared the village for defence. The enemy withdrew to Ervillers, and there once again showed front, but attempted no further attack.

The other Division of his XXIIIrd Army Corps, consisting of mobilized National Guards, under General Robin, had pressed forward on the left on Mory. There was only one battalion and a squadron of Hussars to oppose them. By extending their line on the heights of Beugnâtre, they succeeded in deceiving the enemy as to their numerical strength. The latter marched and counter-marched, and also brought up artillery, but did not attempt an attack, and remained at Mory.

The 30th Brigade and the 3rd Cavalry Division took up their position for the night in and about Bapaume. The 29th Brigade occupied the neighbouring villages on the right and the left of the Arras road.

BATTLE OF BAPAUME.

(January 3rd.)

General Faidherbe had brought his forces close up to a position covered by the siege of Péronne. His four Divisions consisted of fifty-seven battalions, opposed by only seventeen German battalions. He decided on the 3rd to push on in four columns to Grévillers, Biefvillers, on the high road, and to Favreuil on the east.

But General von Goeben was not inclined to give up his position at Bapaume. During the occupation of Favreuil, General von Kummer brought up the 30th Brigade in front of the town, and behind it the 29th, of which, however, three battalions were left in the villages to left and to the right. A reserve was established further to the rear, at Transloy, whither the 8th Rifle battalion, with two batteries, was detached; and General von Barnekow received orders to hold three battalions and the 26th Division of Foot in readiness at Sailly-Saillisel, without raising the blockade. Then the Division under Prince Albrecht, jun.—three battalions, eight squadrons, and three batteries—advanced on Bertincourt, near to the battle-field. In this order, in severe cold and gloomy weather, they were to await the attack of the French.

General Count von der Groeben had already sent the 7th Cavalry Brigade against the enemy's right flank, but it did not succeed in forcing its way through those villages that were occupied by the enemy's infantry.

At Beugnâtre, the right wing of the Robin Division was met by so sharp a fire from two battalions of the 65th, and two horse artillery batteries that had joined them from Transloy, that it withdrew again on Mory, and the garrison of Favreuil was reinforced by two battalions and two batteries against the approach of the Payen Division, which was marching down the high road to the east of that place. The first French gun that came out of Sapignies was immediately destroyed, but several batteries soon became engaged on both sides, and the French entered Favreuil and St. Aubin.

The 40th Regiment advanced to these places at noon from Bertincourt, and, after a lively action, occupied them; yet had to evacuate Favreuil again, and a battery of horse artillery took up a position alongside of the 2nd Regiment of Uhlans of the Guard close to Frémicourt, which secured the right of the Division.

On the left, Bessol's Division had driven the weak garrison out of Biefvillers. The 1st Battalion of the 33rd Regiment, which had set out to retake

that place, became hotly engaged; it lost all but three of its officers, and had to retire upon Avesnes. The Derroja Division had also taken part in this fight. The French now brought a strong force of artillery to the front, and extended their firing-line to the south nearly as far as the road to Albert.

Therefore, at mid-day, General von Kummer decided to confine himself to the local defence of Bapaume. With some sacrifice, the artillery covered the move of the infantry thither. The 1st heavy battery, which was the last to withdraw, lost 2 officers, 97 men, and 36 horses; their guns could only be got away with the help of the infantry.

The 29th Brigade now prepared for an obstinate defence of the old city wall. The 30th was posted behind the place, and the French advanced leisurely as far as the suburb. Then there was a cessation of hostilities. General Faidherbe hoped to take the town by further investing it, without exposing it to the horrors of a bombardment such as precedes the taking of a place by storm. A brigade of the Derroja Division endeavoured to advance through Tilloy, but met there with stubborn resistance from the Rifle battalion and two batteries which had arrived from Péronne. At the same time twenty-four guns of the batteries that were posted behind Bapaume opened fire on the advancing columns, which then withdrew, at half-past

three, by the road to Albert. They soon resumed the attack, and succeeded in entering Tilloy. All the neighbouring batteries now opened fire upon this place. General von Mirus, who, when the 3rd Cavalry Division had passed through Miraumont, had been left behind there, seeing no enemy in his front, but hearing the fighting at Bapaume, advanced from the west, and General von Strubberg from the town, to resume the attack. The French did not await their arrival, and were driven both out of the suburb and Avesnes. The French detachments encamped for the night at Grévillers, Bihucourt, Favreuil, and Beugnâtre, thus surrounding Bapaume on three sides. The day had cost the Germans 52 officers and 698 men, and the French 53 officers and 2066 men.

But only by drawing on every available resource of the VIIIth Army Corps had it been possible to withstand the preponderating attack of the enemy. It had not yet been possible to provide fresh ammunition, and General von Goeben decided to immediately shift the battle-field to behind the Somme. This movement was being executed when the patrols brought information that the enemy was also evacuating its neighbouring position.

The French troops, as yet unaccustomed to active service, had suffered extremely from the day's fighting and the severe cold of the ensuing

night. General Faidherbe could perceive that the forces before Péronne had been withdrawn to Bapaume, and that the Germans thus reinforced would assume the defensive. His first object, the raising of the siege, had been obtained, and the General thought it best not to endanger his success by a second encounter. He led his Corps back in the direction of Arras.

Of the German cavalry the 8th Cuirassiers succeeded in breaking through a French square. The 15th Division withdrew behind the Somme to close under Péronne, and the Saxon cavalry joined the right wing at St.-Quentin.

ACTIONS ON THE LOWER SEINE.

Exactly at the same time the other Corps of the Ist Army was engaged with the enemy on the Lower Seine. The French had not taken up any new position on the right bank of the river, but they held the wooded heights of Bois-de-la-Londe, which surround the southern defile of the little river-peninsula of Grand-Couronne. Here General von Bentheim, with a view of gaining ground in this direction, had posted half of the Ist Army Corps, and advanced on the 4th of January on Les-Moulineaux. Before daybreak Lieut.-Colonel von Hüllessem surprised the enemy's outposts, stormed

the fort of Château Robert-le-Diable, and took prisoners those who had sought refuge amid the ruins of the castle; and the heights of Maison-Brulet were scaled under a heavy fire from the enemy, who lost two guns on this occasion. After renewed fighting at St.-Ouen the French withdrew on Bourgachard in the afternoon, pursued towards six in the evening by half a squadron of Dragoons, two guns, and a company driven on waggons, who took from them two 12-pounders set up on the approach to Rougemontier, disabling the gunners and capturing an ammunition waggon.

After a slight skirmish, the enemy had been driven out of Bourgtheroulde and thrown back in the direction of Brionne. However, the French right wing at Elbeuf had, during the night, hastily withdrawn from a position rendered precarious by the wavering of the remaining detachments. The affair had cost 5 officers and 160 men. The loss of the French must have been equal, besides which they lost 300 prisoners and 4 guns.

General Roye posted his troops behind the Rille on the Pont-Audemer—Brionne line, but the Germans now held Bourgachard, Bourgtheroulde, and Elbeuf strongly garrisoned, with three battalions in readiness at Grand-Couronne for further security. The other troops returned to Rouen. An attempted passage of the French from the

northern bank of the Somme had already been averted at Fauville, whence they again withdrew to Harfleur.

Meanwhile it had not escaped the observation of the VIIIth Army Corps that this time the French did not seek to intrench themselves in the northern forts, but that they halted south of Arras, thus betraying an intention to shortly renew the attack on the investing forces of Péronne.

General von Goeben therefore decided to pass over to the northern bank of the Somme, to their protection, and to take up a flank position whose front the enemy would have to cross in its advance.

On January 6th, after the troops had had one day's rest, and the ammunition had been replenished, the 30th Brigade advanced on Bray, the 29th on Albert. In close vicinity to the enemy was the 36th Cavalry Division at Bapaume, behind them the Cavalry Brigade of the Guard. To secure the left flank Lieut.-Colonel von Pestel occupied Acheux, and the 3rd Reserve Division of the investing Corps advanced west of the position on Feuillères. The Corps Artillery remained meanwhile on the left bank of the Somme, for it almost seemed as if the enemy were preparing an attack on Amiens.

But during the next day the French did not undertake anything of importance, and on the 9th Péronne fell.

Occupation of Péronne.

For fourteen days this little place had been invested by eleven battalions, sixteen squadrons, and ten batteries. Flooded meadows on one side, and on the other, walls with medieval towers had secured it against surprise; yet it was commanded on all sides by overhanging heights.

Still the fire of fifty-eight German guns had not done much damage, and in any case must soon have been given up for want of ammunition; the fire with captured French *matériel* remained without result. The fort continued its fire, and its garrison of only 3500 men even attempted sorties. As before mentioned, on the day of the battle of Bapaume, a portion of the besieging troops had been obliged to withdraw to the support of the VIIIth Army Corps, and in the uncertainty as to the result of this fight it had been necessary to take precautions for the parking of the siege *matériel*. The troops that remained behind were in marching order, and part of the heavy guns had been withdrawn. But the garrison of the place kept on its guard.

Two days later a siege-train of fifty-five heavy guns arrived at La-Fère. A second, of twenty-eight, laden with French ammunition, was on the way from Mézières. The preliminaries of a regular

siege were accomplished, and when at last, on the 8th of January, a large ammunition-transport arrived, the commandant was summoned to give up a defence that had become hopeless.

On the 10th of January, General von Barnekow entered the fortress so amply provided with arms, ammunition and provisions. The garrison were made prisoners.

On the 7th of January, his Majesty the King had summoned General von Manteuffel to another part of the theatre of war, and had given the supreme command of the Ist Army Corps to General von Goeben.

Freed from all care as to Péronne, his only mission thenceforward was the protection of the siege of Paris. For this purpose the Somme, whose passages were all in the hands of the Germans, formed a natural bulwark, behind which even the attack of a superior enemy could be met. And some reinforcements now arrived for the VIIIth Army Corps. The peaceful condition of the Lower Seine permitted of two infantry regiments and two batteries being sent from thence to Amiens. At head-quarters an infantry brigade of the Meuse Army Corps was held in readiness, which in case of need was to precede them by rail.

It was still a matter of uncertainty where the enemy would strike the first blow. General von

Goeben, therefore, spread his forces behind the Somme on a ten-mile line, still holding the places he had acquired to the front of the river, so that if needful he could proceed to attack. In the middle of the month, the portions of the IXth Army Corps under the command of General Count von der Groeben occupied Amiens, Corbie and the Hallue line in a flank position. The 15th Division, holding Bray, took up its quarters south of this place. Next to them, on the left of Péronne, were the 36th Reserves, to the right the 16th Division, and the 3rd Reserve Cavalry Brigade, holding Roisel and Vermand, in front. The 12th Cavalry Division was at St.-Quentin.

The French army had already begun to move on the Cambrai high-road, and its XXIInd Corps had forced back the 3rd Cavalry Division first out of Bapaume and Albert and then back on the Hallue. The XXIIIrd followed the same road, and their goal really appears to have been Amiens. But a reconnaissance had enlightened them as to the difficulty of attacking in that direction, besides which a telegram from the War Minister announced that the Paris Army would make a last supreme effort to break the bonds of the blockade, and the Army of the Nord was enjoined to draw, as far as possible, the attention of the enemy's forces towards itself and away from the capital.

According to these orders General Faidherbe decided to advance on St.-Quentin without delay, whither the Isnard Brigade was already marching from Cambrai. The attack on the right wing of the Germans, consisting for the time being solely of cavalry, endangered their communications, while the vicinity of the northern forts offered the French army shelter and also greater liberty of action.

But General von Goeben had foreseen this withdrawal of the enemy on the left, and had concentrated all his forces to meet it.

The convalescents who were fit for service were attached. Only weak detachments were left at Amiens, and through the approach of the XIIIth Corps, from the Sarthe to the Lower Seine, it was easy to transfer the 3rd Grenadier Regiment and a heavy battery to the Somme.

The withdrawal of the French from Albert and the march of their Army Corps on Combles and Sailly-Saillisel were soon reported by the reconnoitring of the cavalry. A newly-formed Pauly Brigade occupied Bapaumé, and the Isnard Brigade entered St.-Quentin, when General zur Lippe, according to orders received, retired on Ham. At this juncture, General von Goeben set out in an eastern direction, using the roads on both banks of the Somme so that he might the sooner come up with the enemy.

January 17th.—On the 17th, the 12th Cavalry Brigade advanced on La-Fère, the 16th on Ham. The 3rd Reserve Division and the Cavalry Brigade of the Guard arrived at Nesle; the 15th Division and the Corps Artillery, at Villers-Carbonnel. An Army Reserve had been formed out of the troops last from Rouen, which followed to Harbonnières. On the northern bank, the detachment under Count von der Groeben advanced close to Péronne.

The four French Divisions had so far advanced on Vermand that they were enabled to effect a junction next day at St.-Quentin. The XXIIIrd Army Corps was to retire straight upon the town, the XXIInd to cross the Somme lower down, and take up a position south of St.-Quentin.

January 18th.—On the German side, the 16th and the 3rd Reserve Division advanced on Jussy and Flavy, on the southern bank of the Somme, the Army Reserves on Ham. The 12th Cavalry Division at Vendeuil found the country east of the Oise still free from the enemy.

On the other hand, the 15th Division was to cross the Somme at Bric, and advance, together with the troops of General Count von der Groeben, on Vermand and Etreillers, with a view of obtaining touch of the approaching enemy. General von Kummer had been enjoined, in case he found that the French had taken up a position, merely

to watch them and follow them should they retire north, but should they march towards the south, to attack them in force.

At half-past ten, the 29th Brigade came up on this side of Tertry with the rear-guard of the XXIInd Corps and its train. The Hussars broke through one of the screening battalions, drove the waggons in the greatest disorder back on Caulaincourt, but had to abandon prisoners and loot under the fire of the approaching infantry. The French brigade had changed front, and now advanced to the attack of Trescon. This was resisted by the 65th Regiment and three batteries until after two o'clock, when General du Bessol, who had just arrived on the scene of action, ordered the march on St.-Quentin to be resumed.

The XXIIIrd had also halted and detached a brigade against the left flank of the 15th Division This, however, on reaching Cauvigny Farm, came upon the German battalions, which, after protracted firing, pursued the retreating enemy and entered Caulaincourt at half-past three, making 100 prisoners and capturing fourteen provision-waggons.

Meanwhile Count von der Groeben had hastened forward at the sound of firing. The General realized that he could help most efficaciously by marching straight on Vermand. Four battalions

marched on Pœuilly, which was occupied by the enemy, and when the 4th Grenadiers came up to the assault the French retreated, losing some prisoners. Many Gardes-Mobiles were dispersed by the Uhlans. But at Vermand the whole of the XXIIIrd Corps had begun its march.

Count von der Groeben therefore posted his troops behind the Pœuilly ground, thereby occasioning the retiring troops to immediately front whenever pressed. The 15th Division had taken up quarters at Beauvois and Caulaincourt.

The sole aim which the French Generals appear to have had in view on that day was to reach St.-Quentin. They neglected the opportunity of falling with their two Corps upon the single 15th Division. The XXIIIrd Corps passed the night in and westward of St.-Quentin, and likewise the XXIInd, after crossing the Somme at Sérancourt, south of that town. A further advance either on Paris or on the German line of communications depended, now that the Germans were so close upon them, on the issue of a battle; and this, General Faidherbe wished to await at St.-Quentin.

It was important that he should make a stand there, in case the Paris Army succeeded in breaking through the blockade. The ground offered certain advantages—the heights in front of the

town facilitated firing and offered covered shelter to the reserves. Although the Somme divided the army in two halves, the Bridge of St.-Quentin secured to both mutual aid. The enemy also occupied two sides of the river, and including the now newly-joined Isnard and Pauly Brigades, they counted 40,000 men, against an enemy numerically weaker. The Germans, all counted, numbered 32,580 combatants, nearly 6000 being cavalry.

BATTLE OF ST.-QUENTIN.

(19th January.)

General von Goeben had ordered the general attack for the 19th.

General von Barnekow advanced along the southern bank of the Somme (during the occupation of Sérancourt) with the 16th, and the 3rd Reserve Division from Jussy on Essigny; the 12th Cavalry Division advanced on the road which led to La-Fère.

The French columns were still marching to take up their position so as to have the town on their rear; and they already occupied Grugies. While the 32nd Brigade marched north to Essigny—the Reserve Division halting behind the place—the 31st Brigade started at a quarter to ten for Grugies.

This attack was flanked by the French brigade under Gislain, which had meanwhile occupied the positions of Contescourt and Castres. Its front was met by the brigades under Foerster and Pittié.

The fire of the approaching German batteries was at once returned vigorously from Le-Moulin-de-Tout-Vent. At eleven o'clock the second battalion of the 69th Regiment formed into company columns, to cross the entirely open ground towards the heights between them and Grugies; but the attempt, which was renewed four times, was frustrated by the annihilating cross-fire of the enemy. The isolated battalion was nearly exhausted, and only on being joined by six fresh companies of the 29th Regiment did it succeed in forcing the French back, after a desperate hand-to-hand fight; but the latter made a stand before Grugies and its sugar-factory.

On the right wing, the 12th Cavalry Division had preceded the others on the La-Fère road. The French brigade under Aynes, which had hitherto been held in reserve, pushed forward at the double to meet it, and as Count zur Lippe could dispose of but one battalion of infantry, the movement was arrested at Cornet-d'Or. But when, at noon, they were joined by reinforcements from Tergnier, the Saxon Rifles stormed the park on the high-road, and the Schleswig-Holstein

Fusiliers stormed La-Neuville. The French, after losing many prisoners, were vigorously pursued back to the outskirts of St.-Quentin, the first place which afforded them shelter.

Meantime, the 31st Brigade was engaged in a hot fire on both sides of the railway-line before Grugies; behind its right wing was posted the 32nd, in the valley near the high-road, where it suffered severely from the enemy's shrapnel. On the left, the advancing detachment had not succeeded in entering Contescourt; and now the French at Grugies made so determined and overwhelming an attack, that the 16th Division had to be withdrawn as far as Essigny.

When, after twelve o'clock, General Faidherbe joined the XXIIIrd Corps, he had every reason to hope that the XXIInd Corps would be able to maintain its position. But certainly the most important result was to be looked for on the northern portion of the battle-field.

Here Robin's Division had taken up a position between Fayet and Francilly. The brigade under Isnard had joined it on the left, the brigade under Lagrange of Payen's Division extended its line as far as the Somme. At Gricourt the Michelet Brigade remained behind in reserve, and the brigade under Pauly secured the communications in rear.

As early as eight o'clock General Count von der Groeben (on the German left) set out on the Roman road from Pœuilly with eight battalions and twenty-eight guns; on the left the cavalry brigade accompanied the march.

The East-Prussians immediately drove the French out of Holnon and Sélency, and then advanced against Fayet and up the heights of Moulin-Coutte. A gun that was being served, ammunition-waggons, and many prisoners were then taken from the enemy.

By degrees the twenty-eight guns all reached the mill on the height and opened a duel with the artillery of Robin's Division. But after half an hour the ammunition failed, for the waggons which had been sent on the previous day to the VIIIth Corps had not yet come up to the relief. The batteries, which were, moreover, suffering from the fire of the infantry, had to retire on Holnon, and as Francilly was still occupied by the enemy in flank and rear, a further advance was temporarily postponed.

On the right, General von Kummer with the 15th Division had already begun the march from Beauvois, and had reached Etreillers at ten. The King's Hussars, after driving back the enemy's horse, drew up near to L'Epine-de-Dallon, and the 29th Brigade entered Savy. North of that place

three batteries opened fire against the artillery of Payen's Division, and then the 65th Regiment advanced to the attack of the surrounding woods. The smaller one to the south was taken, but here, as at Francilly, the Isnard Brigade established itself in the larger one to the north.

At noon the brigade under Lagrange advanced on the small wood and soon entered it, but was again driven back by the 65th.

The 33rd Regiment was posted in readiness to secure the threatened right flank of the 29th Brigade, and with those already under fire was joined by two heavy batteries which had just come with the Corps Artillery from Savy. At the same time the 30th Brigade advanced from Roupy on the right of the 29th.

Meanwhile, Colonel von Massow had, at one o'clock, again assumed the offensive against the much more advanced enemy's left. Six companies of the 44th Regiment advanced on Fayet, and opening fire at the shortest range, drove the French from the field. They were followed by two batteries, which resumed action against the great artillery position at Moulin-de-Cépy.

General Paulze D'Ivoy, who saw his communications with Cambrai in such imminent danger, had already summoned the brigade under Michelet from its reserve post, west of the town, and thus

reinforced now advanced on Fayet. Those Prussian detachments that were in the place had to be withdrawn to Moulin-Coutte; but the further advance of the enemy towards this height was met by a flank attack on Selency, and at the same time the farm of Bois-des-Roses was carried. The French again withdrew on Fayet.

There, at Francilly, and in the northern stretch of wood, they held their own until half-past one, while at that time, on the German side, the three brigades had been brought up into the fighting-line. The Army Reserve had, indeed, advanced from Ham on Roupy, but General von Goeben, who had from that spot observed the slow progress of the 16th Division, had already sent this Reserve through Sérancourt to its relief at eleven o'clock.

Colonel von Boecking, with his three battalions, three squadrons, and two batteries, advanced from there against Contescourt. Hastening forward with the cavalry, he brought his artillery into action; the 41st Regiment, upon its arrival, immediately moved forward to the attack. In communication with the battalion of the 19th Regiment which was already on the spot, the French were at one o'clock driven out of that place and out of Castres, with the loss of many prisoners, towards the heights of Grugies. Against

these heights the fire of the artillery was now directed, having gradually been increased to thirty guns.

So as to yet further dispute the position, General Lecomte reinforced Gislain's Brigade by several battalions withdrawn from the brigades of Pittié and Aynès.

The East-Prussian Regiment succeeded, nevertheless, by half-past two o'clock, although itself attacked on all sides, in hurling back the enemy into the hollow in front of Grugies.

Colonel von Boecking's vigorous attack was conspicuous along the whole line.

With a view to again undertaking a general advance, General von Barnekow now ordered up his last reserves from Essigny, when towards three o'clock Pittié's Brigade unexpectedly pressed forward along the line of railway. With his right under the fire of the artillery posted at Castres, he allowed his left to be surprised by the charge of five squadrons of the reserve cavalry at Urvilliers. Simultaneously Colonel von Hartzberg now advanced with the 32nd Brigade, and drove the enemy back to Moulin-de-Tout-Vent.

But Foerster's Brigade, south of Grugies, had held out stubbornly, although now seriously threatened on the left from Giffécourt, as well as by the 12th Cavalry Division. With the retreat

of Pittié's Brigade now completely exposing their left flank, and their last troops exhausted by a long struggle, the French found themselves finally forced to vacate their hard-contested position.

The 31st Brigade advanced along the railway-line as far as the sugar-factory, and Colonel von Boecking drove the last French detachments out of Grugies. He then opened his attack upon Moulin-de-Tout-Vent with his artillery. Up these heights the 41st Battalion, ordered up from Essigny, and the 32nd Brigade advanced in a combined attack. The French did not hold out much longer, and were soon in retreat. The entire German front, with the 12th Cavalry Division on its right, moved forward on to the town, which now also suffered from the fire of the artillery posted at Gauchy. The cavalry repeatedly broke through the retreating portions of the enemy's force; and the railway-station and suburb, in which was found the rear-guard only of the XXth French Corps, fell after a short struggle.

Whilst on the southern portion of the field of battle the action took this turn, the attack on the northern side had also been renewed.

Already by two o'clock the 28th Regiment from Roupy had carried the farm-house of l'Epine-de-Dallon, on the Ham road; and almost simulta-

neously Count von der Groeben's infantry came up to resume the offensive.

Whilst on the right some companies of the 4th and 44th Regiments opposed the debouching of the French out of the extensive woods, Major von Elpons, with six companies of the Crown Prince Grenadiers, advanced from Holnon and Selency upon Francilly, and, notwithstanding the hot fire of the defenders, forced an entrance into this most straggling village, in which many prisoners were made. As, however, the East-Prussian Regiment advanced yet further south of the Roman road, it had in its turn to sustain a formidable attack.

To cover their threatened line of retreat, Michelet's Brigade from Foyet once more advanced, and Pauly's Brigade also marched upon Moulin-Coutte. This position, which had in the meantime been strengthened by artillery, was, however, obstinately contested by the 44th Regiment, and when the Grenadier companies poured in from the left of the Roman road, the enemy's attack was here again repulsed.

Meanwhile the 29th Brigade, followed by the 30th, had begun to move on St.-Quentin, having the 33rd Regiment on its right and the 65th Regiment on the left. The latter regiment now took complete possession of the more extensive of the woods, and forty-eight guns were driven

up on both sides of the road from Savy. The further advance of the infantry was effected in company column and in extended order, for the troops were suffering severely from the heavy grenade fire brought to bear upon them by the French. However, the Lagrange and Isnard Brigades did not await the assault, but at four o'clock retired on St.-Quentin with the loss of one gun.

The French artillery once more came into action at Rocourt, but at five o'clock had quickly to abandon the position, and the French now confined themselves to the defence of the barricaded entrances into the suburbs of St.-Martin.

Six Prussian batteries were brought up against these, and the 29th Brigade was for some time engaged under a hot fire of the strongly-manned buildings and gardens; whereupon several companies from Rocourt established themselves in the suburb, in which street-fighting was still continued, even when Lieutenant-Colonel von Hüllessem had succeeded in crossing the bridge over the canal, and entered the town itself.

By four o'clock, General Faidherbe had already concluded that the XXIIIrd Corps would in all probability be unable to hold its position. Under these circumstances his choice was limited between a night retreat, or throwing himself

into St.-Quentin. He had not yet come to any decision, when he met in the town General Lecointe, who reported that he had abandoned the defence of the left bank of the Somme. Thanks to the resistance still offered by the XXIIIrd Corps on the north, the XXIInd was enabled to retire unmolested on Le-Cateau.

The officer in supreme command now ordered General Paulze d'Ivoy to retire on that place, but the latter only received the order at six in the evening, when the brigades on the right wing—Pauly's and Michelet's—had already been routed in the direction of Cambrai. The more obstinately the two remaining brigades now defended the suburb of St.-Martin, the more critical for them must prove the result of the action. Attacked in rear by the battalion under Colonel von Boecking, the greater portion were made prisoners. The 41st Regiment alone took 54 officers and 2260 men prisoners, besides capturing 4 guns. General Faidherbe only escaped a similar fate through the instrumentality of the inhabitants.

The action only ceased at half-past six that evening, and the troops passed the night in the town and in the captured villages.

The hard-won victory had cost the Germans 96 officers and 2304 men; 3000 wounded Frenchmen were found on the scene of action, and

the number of unwounded prisoners exceeded 9000.

According to theory, pursuit should invariably follow on a victory—a law recognized by all, and particularly acquiesced in by novices; and yet, in practice it is seldom observed. Military history points to few examples, such as the well-known one of La-Belle-Alliance. It requires a very strong and pitiless will to impose fresh exertions and dangers upon a body of troops who have marched, fought and fasted for ten or twelve hours, instead of the longed-for rest and food. But given the existence of this supposed will, pursuit will yet depend on the circumstances under which the victory has been obtained. It will be difficult of execution when all the units on the field of battle, as at Königgratz, have become so intermixed that it requires hours to again re-form them into tactical bodies; or when, as at St.-Quentin, all, even the troops last committed to action, have become so entangled that not one single tactically complete infantry force is available. Without the support of such a body, cavalry at night will be delayed by every obstacle and every small post of the enemy, and by itself can seldom fulfil the task.

General von Goeben did not pursue the enemy till the following day. His advanced cavalry fought up to the suburbs of Cambrai and the glacis of

Landrecies, without meeting with any resistance, and they brought in merely some hundred stragglers. The Infantry Divisions pursued within one mile (three English) of Cambrai. Against this fortress nothing could be undertaken through want of siege *matériel*, and there was no military advantage to be derived in extending further north. Among the news to hand, it transpired that a considerable portion of the French Northern Army had retired upon Lille, Douai and Valenciennes. As fresh enterprises were consequently not to be expected, General von Goeben brought his force back to the Somme, where towards the end of the month they entered upon their winter quarters, between Amiens and St.-Quentin.

On the Lower Seine, the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg had entered Rouen with the XIIIth Corps on the 25th, after having encountered on the march only a few Franctireurs. Although General Loysel had increased his force to nearly 30,000 through the reinforcements from Cherbourg, he had remained entirely inactive.

General von Goeben had in view the transfer to the Army of the Somme of that portion of the Ist Corps still before Rouen; but this was disapproved of by telegram from head-quarters, who, on political grounds, ordered its further retention there.

Operations at the South-Eastern Seat of War up to 17th of January.

Investment of Belfort.—At the south-eastern seat of war, the forces detailed to operate against Belfort had only been gradually brought together under cover of the XIVth Army Corps.

The town is surrounded by a bastioned enceinte. The citadel, standing upon high rocks, has the advantage of a great command, and for more effective fire its surrounding works are terraced. On the left bank of the Savoureuse, newly erected lines of works protected the suburb and railway station. On the adjacent heights to the north-east, the forts of La-Miotte and La-Justice, connected to the main work by continuous lines, enclosed a spacious intrenched camp. The two forts of Les-Perches might certainly have threatened the safety of the site, approaching the citadel as they do on the south, to within only 1000 metres, from whence the works on the left bank of the river come under the direct fire of its guns. But here two walled forts had been erected before the advent of the enemy, and besides these the adjoining woods and positions, as for instance Pérouse and Danjoutin, had been intrenched ; nor was the fortress deficient in bomb-proof places. It was armed with 341 heavy guns, and provisioned

for five months. As immediately after the opening of the campaign the VIIth French Corps had vacated Alsace, only about 5000 Gardes-Mobiles remained behind in Belfort, whose garrison, however, increased by the National Guard, now exceeded 17,000.

The far-seeing Commandant, Colonel Denfert, exerted all his resources mainly in the occupation in force of the zone in his immediate front. The advanced detachments were every day assigned fresh operations, which the artillery of the fortress had to support at extreme ranges.

Opposed to him, General von Tresckow could, in the first place, only dispose of twenty weak Landwehr battalions, five squadrons and six field-batteries, making an aggregate of barely 15,000. At first, he had to confine himself to a mere investment. The troops intrenched themselves in the distantly radiating villages, and were called upon to repel many sorties.

Orders had been received from army headquarters to undertake the regular investment of the fortress. To General von Mertens was entrusted the direction of the engineer duties, and to Lieut.-Col. Scheliha, the command of the artillery.

The difficulties of the undertaking were apparent. The rocky nature of the soil could not but increase the labour of throwing up earthworks, and

the cold season was approaching. The assault could only be delivered successfully on the south of the main work—the formidable citadel. At this period only fifty heavy guns were available, and the infantry was not even strong enough to efficiently invest the place on all sides.

Under these circumstances, it was left to the discretion of General von Tresckow to attempt the possibility of reducing Belfort by mere bombardment. Towards this purpose the attack was chiefly directed on the western side, in which quarter, after the enemy's garrison had been driven out of Valdoye, the infantry occupied Essert and Bavilliers, as well as the adjacent wooded heights.

On December 2nd, seven batteries were constructed on the plateau between these two villages, by 3000 men, under cover of two battalions. The hard-frozen ground added to the difficulties of the task; yet, notwithstanding the moonlight night, these operations would appear to have escaped the attention of the besieged. When on the following morning the sun had dispersed the fog and lit up the fortress, fire was opened upon it.

The fortress replied at first but feebly, but afterwards with increasing vigour, from the entire line of works, up to within 4000 metres of the

forts of La-Miotte and La-Justice, and the losses in the trenches were considerable.

Nevertheless, four fresh batteries were constructed in advance of Bavilliers, and on the fall of La-Tuilerie the infantry pressed on until within 150 metres of the enemy's most advanced trenches.

They succeeded also in causing a conflagration within the town; but the ammunition was soon exhausted, whilst from the high citadel an effective fire was unceasingly kept up, and there were constantly renewed sorties on the part of the garrison to be repelled. It was now clear, after all previous attempts had failed, that no assault could prove successful unless systematically carried out.

Colonel von Ostrowski, to the south, had, on December 13th, carried the French positions of Adelnans and the wooded heights of Le-Bosmont and La-Brosse. To the east of the latter place two batteries, and on the northern skirt four additional batteries had been thrown up, not without great difficulty arising from thaw having bogged the soil. On January 7th fifty guns opened fire.

The superiority of the artillery of the attack was soon manifest. Fort Bellevue suffered severely, and the fire from Basses-Perches was entirely silenced. But more important than all,

the village of Danjoutin, strongly garrisoned and intrenched by the enemy, opposed all further advance. During the night of the 8th January, seven companies attacked this position on the northern side, at the same time occupying the railway-embankment. With empty rifles, the Landwehr posted themselves against the hot fire of the French, and broke into the streets up to the church itself. The supports hastening from the fort were driven back at the railway-embankment, but the fight went on around the buildings in the southern quarter of the village till towards noon. Of the defenders, twenty officers and 700 men were taken prisoners.

Typhus and small-pox had broken out in Belfort; but with the besieging force also the number of the sick reached a considerable figure, caused by arduous work undertaken in inclement weather.

As a rule, the battalions could only muster 500 strong, and this led General von Tresckow to devote half the number to securing the investment from without, principally on the south.

Trustworthy intelligence estimated the French strength at Besançon at 62,000. Although hitherto entirely inactive, they now evinced a strong desire to press on to the relief of the hard-pressed fortress, by the line of the Doubs.

The fortified castle of Montbéliard was held by one battalion, and armed with heavy guns. Between the Doubs and the Swiss frontier, at Delle, General Debschitz had taken up a position with eight battalions, two squadrons, and two batteries, and General von Werder concentrated the XIVth Corps at Noroy, Aillevans, and Athésans, to oppose in strength any movement on the part of the garrison.

From January 5th onwards there were fought before Vesoul a series of engagements, in which the besiegers advanced from the south and west up to within a distance of one mile of that town. There could be no doubt that very considerable forces were engaged in these operations. East of the Ognon, the enemy's posts were advanced as far as Rougemont, although in lesser force. In these actions 500 were taken prisoners; and it was at once evident that besides the XVIIIth, also the XXIVth and XXth Corps formed part of Bourbaki's army; and this circumstance suddenly threw a new light upon a totally changed phase of the war.

TRANSFER OF THE FRENCH EASTERN ARMY TO THE SOUTH-EASTERN SEAT OF WAR, TOWARDS THE END OF DECEMBER.

As had been foreseen at army head-quarters

at Versailles, an attempt had been made to bring about a combined action between the forces of Chanzy and Bourbaki. As we have already seen, the advance of the former (Chanzy) was met by Prince Frederick Charles, already on the Loir, and Bourbaki had prepared his advance by Montargis to the relief of Paris. But he delayed its execution until the 19th December, when the IInd German Army had already returned to Orleans, from its expedition to Le-Mans. General Bourbaki then perceived the fact that the IInd Army would, upon his further advance, fall on his flank, and he the more readily fell in with another plan, devised by Monsieur de Freycinet, and favoured by the Dictator Gambetta.

This was for the XVth Corps to remain at Bourges and to secure that place by intrenched positions at Vierzon and Nevers; the XVIIIth and XXth were to proceed to Beaune by railway, and, in conjunction with Garibaldi and Crémer, 70,000 strong, to occupy Dijon. The newly-formed XXIVth Corps was also to be moved by railway from Lyons to Besançon, where, in combination with the forces already there, it would attain a strength of 50,000. Co-operating then with the "victorieux de Dijon," it would be easy to raise the siege of Belfort, "même sans coup férir." It was considered that the mere presence in that

place of this large force, greatly exceeding, as it did, 100,000, would preclude any attacks upon the Northern forts; in any case, there was the certainty of cutting through the enemy's various lines of communication, and later on, the prospect of a combined action with Faidherbe.

The movements by rail from the Loire to the Saône had already commenced by December 23rd. In the absence of all preparations, many interruptions in the traffic naturally occurred, and the troops suffered severely from the intense cold and from want of necessary comforts. After Chagny and Chalons-sur-Seine had been reached, and it was ascertained that the Germans had already evacuated Dijon, it was decided to again embark the troops so as to bring them nearer to Besançon, whence arose a fresh delay; and it was only in the beginning of the new year that the Eastern Army was in readiness, between Dijon and Besançon. The XVth Corps was also ordered up, but it took fourteen days to get so far.

The comprehensive plan of Freycinet, and his sanguine expectations, had been favoured by the circumstance that the transfer of a large contingent of the army to a distant place in the seat of war had been kept from the knowledge of the IInd Army, as well as from that of the XIVth Corps and army head-quarters, for a fortnight. Ru-

mours and newspaper articles had no doubt somewhat before this given intimations, but General von Werder's telegram of January 5th was the first really authentic announcement by which it was known beyond doubt that the Germans now stood face to face with a changed aspect of the situation. In Versailles arrangements were at once made and steps taken for the formation of a new Southern Army.

There was available for this purpose the IInd Corps at Auxerre, under General von Zastrow, which during this period of uncertainty had constantly operated between the Saône and Yonne, according as the one or the other appeared to be threatened. The supreme command of these two Corps, to which was afterwards added the XIVth, was entrusted to General von Manteuffel. General von Werder could not be immediately reinforced, and for a time the XIVth Corps was thrown upon its own resources.

Notwithstanding their advantage, the French did more manœuvring than fighting. General Bourbàki aimed at surrounding the left wing of the XIVth Corps, and thus entirely cutting it off from Belfort.

On January 5th the XVIIIth Corps had advanced by Grandvelle, and the XXth by Echenoz-le-Sec, on Vesoul; but, as we have seen, they

had there met with opposition, and as the Corps diverging to the right to Esprels heard that Villersexel was occupied by the Germans, the Commander determined upon a still more easterly and circuitous route. On the 8th the two Corps of the left wing marched off to the right, the XVIIIth to Montbozon, the XXth to Rougemont; the XXIVth went back on Cuse. At the same time General Crémer received orders to move from Dijon on Vesoul. On the 9th, therefore, the XXIVth and XXth Corps lay near Villechevreux and Villargent on the Arcey-Villersexel road, whilst the head of the XVIIIth Corps reached that latter place and Esprels.

General von Werder had no alternative but to follow this flank movement in all haste. He ordered the Baden Division to Athésans, the 4th Reserve Division to Aillevans, and Von der Goltz's Brigade to Noroy-le-Bourg. The Trains were marched on Lure.

ACTION OF VILLERSEXEL.

(January 9th.)

On January 9th, at seven in the morning, the Reserve Division was sent from Noroy on to Aillevans, and commenced bridging the Ognon, to admit of the continuation of the march. A flank-

ing part of the 25th Regiment, sent to operate on the right, was fired on at Villersexel, and the attempt to carry the stone bridge at that place failed shortly after. The French had occupied, with two and a half battalions, the town, situated on a height, on the further bank of the river. Shortly afterwards reinforcements came up on the German side. Two batteries opened fire upon the place and upon the still advancing enemy. The 25th Regiment crossed the river and broke into the walled-in park and into the castle. At one o'clock the French were driven out of the town, with the loss of many prisoners, and a cessation of hostilities ensued.

The Prussian contingent had been seriously threatened in flank by the advance from Esprels of the 1st Division and the reserve artillery of the French XVIIIth Corps. General von der Goltz, however, opposed them by occupying the village of Moimay.

He also sent to Villersexel nine companies of the 30th Regiment, to the relief of the 25th Regiment, so as to allow the latter to rejoin its own division in the forward march. His combined brigade was eventually to form the rear-guard to the entire column.

General von Werder, who observed the considerable force in which the French moved on

Villersexel from the south, had concluded that there was less to be gained by forcing his own passage across the Ognon than by opposing that of the French, who saw in it facilities for a nearer approach to Belfort. He therefore recalled the infantry already issuing from the southern quarter of the town, and sent it with the batteries to the northern side of the river. Here the main body of the 4th Reserve Division took up a defensive position, and the Baden Division was stopped in its march at Arpenans and Lure, to come to the reinforcement it now stood greatly in need of.

It was already evening when large columns of the French advanced on Villersexel and shelled the town with their artillery.

Favoured by the darkness, the French found their way into the park and castle, from which the German garrison had already been withdrawn; and as the general condition of things did not seem to necessitate the occupation of Villersexel, the commanding officer ordered the evacuation of the place. Though hard pressed by the enemy, this move had been nearly completed, when orders arrived from General von Werder to hold the town.

At once four battalions from the Reserve Division advanced to the renewed attack. The 25th Regiment turned about at the bridge over the Ognon and joined them. The Landwehr rushed

into the lower floor of the large castle, but the French defended the upper floors and the cellar. On the stairs and in the passages of the already burning buildings there ensued a hot and changeful combat, and the fight was maintained in the streets. Not till the General in command was left to his own free will, and ordered a cessation, were dispositions made at one o'clock in the morning for gradual retirement, which was completed by three. The Reserve Division then recrossed the bridge at Aillevans, and occupied St.-Sulpice on its right.

General von der Goltz had contested Moimay until evening.

Of the XIVth Corps only 15,000 had been engaged, of whom 26 officers and 553 men were killed. The French losses included 27 officers and 627 men; but they left behind in the hands of the Germans 700 unwounded prisoners. Those who chiefly took part in these operations were the XVIIIth and XXth Corps; the XXIVth Corps, on account of the fighting behind it, had discontinued its march from Arcey to Sevenans. Detachments of the gradually incoming XVth Corps moved from the south in the direction of Belfort.

On the morning of January 10th, General von Werder massed his Corps in the vicinity

of Aillevans, ready to engage the enemy should the latter attempt an advance on Villersexel. But an attack was not made, and thus the march was resumed that same morning. As a matter of fact, the French in three Corps were as near to Belfort as the Germans were with three Divisions. To cover the retreat, the Reserve Division took up a position at Athésans, and on the following day all the Commands had reached and occupied the Lisaine line. On the right, by Frahier and Chalonvillars, stood the Baden Division; in the centre, the Reserve Brigade, between Chagey and Couthenans; on the left, the Reserve Division, at Héricourt and Tavey. On the south, General von Debschitz watched from Delle, and Colonel von Bredow from Arcey; and to the west, at Lure, was Colonel von Willisen, with the detachment from Vesoul of eight companies, thirteen squadrons, two batteries.

It would, in fact, have been possible to pass between the enemy and Belfort.

The French leader had, under the intoxicating impression of a victory, resigned himself to inactivity. "Le Général Billot," he reported to the Government at Bordeaux, "a occupé Esprels et s'y est maintenu." We know that he was never attacked there at all, and that he did not succeed in driving away General von der Goltz

from the vicinity of Moimay. "Le Général Clinchant a enlevé avec un entrain remarquable Villersexel;" but the fight of the 9th was, as regards the Germans, maintained with only a portion of the XIVth Corps, to secure the right flank in the march of the main body. Whilst, then, these moves were zealously continued, the French army remained stationary for two days, ready for action and with the confident expectation that the enemy, described as beaten, would return to the attack.

Only on the 13th did the XXIVth Corps advance on Arcey, the XXth on Saulnot, and the XVIIIth follow up to Sevenans. The XVth was to support an attack on Arcey by Ste.-Marie.

General von Werder had utilized this interval, and preceded the troops to test the possibility of taking up a position on the Lisaine, and to take counsel with General von Tresckow.

An inspection showed that at Frahier the Lisaine becomes an unimportant streamlet, flowing through a broad grassy hollow, and thence to Chagey through steep wooded slopes. At Héricourt the valley opens out into a wide plain, which is however commanded by the rocky heights of Mont-Vaudois. Lower down the wooded heights follow the river as far as Montbéliard, which forms a strong base where the line closes by the Allaine.

The wooded nature of the plain, west of the Lisaine, would necessarily increase the assailants' difficulties in deploying large masses, and with a long artillery column. It is true that during the prevailing severe cold the river was everywhere frozen over; but only two high roads ran in the direction by which the French army in the valley were marching down the stream on Montbéliard and on Héricourt. The other ways down were narrow, hollow roads, rendered difficult by frost.

General von Tresckow had already occupied the most important position with siege guns, the Castle of Montbéliard with six, and the neighbouring height of La-Grange-Dame with five heavy guns. Seven of them were placed on Mont-Vaudois and near Héricourt; besides these, twenty-one others commanded the valley of the Allaine as far as Delle, on the south.

All the troops that could be spared from the investing force were withdrawn from before Belfort. Still there remained the important consideration that the available forces might not suffice to entirely cover the whole of the Lisaine line. The right wing was the locally weakest portion of the whole position, but here there was the least danger of the enemy's main attack, for the many needs of the numerous but inadequately equipped French army

made the nearest possible vicinity of one of the railroads a necessity. The Vesoul line, over Lure, was broken in many places, and the Besançon line led to the strong left wing. The country north of Chagey might therefore be held by weaker forces, and a reserve was formed out of the largest part of the Baden Division, which was distributed in rear of centre and left between Mandrevillars, Brévilliers and Charmont.

The respite accorded by the enemy was turned to account with the utmost eagerness for the digging of rifle-pits, the building of batteries, the restoring of telegraph and relay lines, the improvement of roads and the providing of victuals and ammunition.

January 13th.—On the morning of the 13th the posting of the 3rd Reserve Division was begun at Arcey, Ste.-Marie and Gonvillars. They were instructed to withdraw before a superior force, but to hold their own long enough to entail the deployment of the French columns. The duel with the widely dispersed French artillery was therefore prolonged for some time; then, after a three hours' obstinate resistance, a new position was taken up behind the stream of the Rupt, and the retreat on Tavey delayed until four in the afternoon. The advanced guard of General von der Goltz, after a whole brigade had deployed against it,

also took up a position on the same level, at Couthenans.

Along the Allaine line the French had not succeeded in driving General von Debschitz's detachments out of Dasle and Croix.

January 14th.—On the 14th, General von Willisen, with fifty dismounted Dragoons, drove back the enemy who were advancing on Lure, and then retired with his detachment on Ronchamp.

The French army did not, even on that day, undertake a serious attack. It lay massed with the XVth, XXIVth, and XXth Corps, and hardly a mile (German) from the German left and centre. The right was supposed by General Bourbaki to rest upon Mont-Vaudois. His plan was to cross the Lisaine above this place in force, and to facilitate the front attack by surrounding the enemy. The XVIIIth Army Corps and the Division under Crémer were told off for this purpose. The drawback to this judicious arrangement was that the two above-mentioned detachments, destined by the officer in supreme command to open the fight on the 14th, had to advance by the longest line of march. On this day the leading troops of the XVIIIth Army Corps barely succeeded in reaching Lomont, by difficult hill and woodland passes, and the Crémer Brigade had only then begun to

advance from Vesoul. A postponement to the 15th was thereupon determined.

On the German side, a general attack of the superior enemy was hourly expected, and General von Werder felt himself bound to telegraph the extreme seriousness of his position to Versailles. The rivers, being frozen, were passable, and the duty of covering Belfort curtailed the liberty of his movements and endangered the existence of his corps. He earnestly prayed that a decision might be arrived at as to whether Belfort was still to be held.

At the army head-quarters it was considered that any further withdrawal of the XVth Army Corps would have the immediate effect of raising the siege and causing the loss of the considerable matériel which had been provided for it; that it was impossible to foresee where such a line of action would end; and that it could but delay the co-operation of the army advancing by forced marches under General von Manteuffel. At three o'clock p.m. on the 15th of January a positive order was conveyed to General von Werder to accept battle in front of Belfort. He was, as was only fair, relieved of the moral responsibility of the consequences of a possibly disastrous issue. But before this order could reach him, the General had already decided on its execution.

BATTLE OF THE LISAINE.

(January 15th to 17th.)

January 15th.—On the morning of the 15th of January, the French XVth Army Corps, with two Divisions augmented by artillery, advanced on Montbéliard, a third followed in reserve. The East-Prussian Landwehr battalions, which had pushed forward as far as the farm of Mont-Chevis and Ste.-Suzanne, held their position for a long time, advanced to the attack of their own accord, and drove the heads of the enemy's columns back upon the stream of the Rupt. But when the latter, during the afternoon, posted themselves in force along the edge of the wood, they were at two o'clock ordered back to the left bank of the Lisaine. The neighbouring town of Montbéliard, entirely commanded by the surrounding heights, was voluntarily evacuated, and the fortified castle alone held. But east of Montbéliard General von Glümer with the 1st Baden Brigade took up a position, and had four field-batteries besides siege guns brought up to the plateau of La-Grange-Dame.

Towards the close of the day the French, after continuous but ineffectual bombardment from eight batteries, took possession of the town, but did not make any further advance.

Neither had they succeeded in crossing the

Lisaine at Béthoncourt. An officer and sixty men, who sought cover within a walled cemetery from the sharp fire of the defenders, were taken prisoners.

Further to the north the French XXIVth Corps continued to advance, but it was two o'clock before their columns succeeded in deploying out of the wood. Four battalions did, indeed, succeed in entering and occupying the village of Bussurel, situated on the western bank of the Lisaine, but their further advance was frustrated by the fire of the defenders posted behind the railway embankment, and by that of the Baden battalions and batteries drawn from the main reserve.

Héricourt, but one mile from Belfort, on the great high road of Besançon, became a place of importance in the German line. Here the enemy on the hither side of the Lisaine was met by the right wing of the 4th Reserve Division.

The little wooded height of Mougnot, which forms a sort of bridge-head at the narrow gorge through which the road passes, had been fortified by abattis, batteries and rifle-pits, the town in the rear prepared for defence, and the base of the heights on either side studded with artillery. Four East-Prussian Landwehr battalions were joined on the right by the Reserve Brigade, which held the slopes of Mont-Vaudois as far as Luze.

At about ten o'clock the French artillery deployed on the open heights close to the line of approach in the neighbourhood of Trémoins. Upon their infantry advancing on the left over Byans, the detachment which till then had been left at Tavey went back to Héricourt in reserve, and the enemy's first attack on Mougnot was repulsed by the garrison and by the fire of sixty-one guns on the further bank of the river. The attempt was not repeated on that day, and the French confined themselves to a sharp but ineffectual cannonade.

According to the instructions left behind by General Bourbaki, the French were to await the result of the great encircling movement which was to be carried out by General Billot with the XVIIIth and by the Crémer Divisions. As, however, these latter had not yet put in an appearance, the main reserve had to be brought forward left of Coisevaux to secure General Clinchant's flank.

The orders from head-quarters had only reached the XVIIIth Corps at midnight. The latter had moreover to effect a heavy march over deeply snowed-up woodland paths. This entailed intercommunications, not only between the wing-columns of the 1st and 3rd Divisions, but even with the Division under Crémer at Lyoffans. This Division had by dint of the greatest exertion reached Lure during the night, and could not

get beyond Béverne until nine in the morning. A fresh delay was occasioned by the order to bring up in front of the infantry the artillery (even the reserve artillery, which brought up the rear), and thus it happened that the XVIIIth Corps did not succeed in deploying two of its Divisions against Luze and Chagey till between 12 and 2 p.m.

The 1st Division occupied Couthenans with one battalion, and brought up five batteries on the decline behind the heights to the north of that place.

But the fire from the bank on the other side of the river prevented their further ascent, and after the lapse of a short time several of these detachments had but two guns left fit for action, although the Germans, with regard to the difficulty of procuring fresh ammunition, had used it as sparingly as possible. At three o'clock there was a pause in the firing, which was resumed on the arrival of reinforcements, when the artillery of the XXIVth Corps took part in it. An infantry attack on a larger scale was not yet attempted.

There was scarcely more purpose in the movement of the 3rd Division against Chagey, which was only occupied by a Baden battalion; yet it was here that the enveloping movement of the German right wing by way of Mont-Vaudois was to take place. The wood adjoining the first houses

of the village and its steepness was the only difficulty attached to the descent of the hill. Two French battalions suddenly appeared from the gorge that lay south of it and drove in the Baden outposts; the further attack was to be supported from Couthenans on the south, but the infantry advancing from thence found itself forced to turn back by the fire from the opposite bank. Only after a renewed effort did the Zouaves succeed in entering Chagey, where a hard fight began amid the houses. Meanwhile two Baden battalions arrived, who, at five o'clock, drove the enemy out of the villages back into the wood. Fresh reinforcements hastened to their support from the reserve near at hand, the short winter's day was over, and during the night the French attempted nothing further. The 2nd Division of the French Corps had only arrived as far as Béverne, the cavalry had not moved from Lyoffans.

The Crémer Division had, despite its late arrival at Lure, continued the march in the early morning. After the above-mentioned halts and intercommunications the 9th Brigade advanced on Etobon, and there at noon an engagement took place with a detachment of General von Degenfeld. When the 2nd Brigade came up, the first moved forward through the Wood of Thure, to cross the Lisaine above Chagey. The roads had first of all to be

partly made practicable by pioneers, which occasioned considerable delay. The 2nd Brigade then followed in the dark, leaving a reconnoitring party behind at Etobon. A fresh collision with some Baden contingents determined General Crémer to extinguish all the watch-fires. His troops remained under arms throughout the hard winter night.

On the German side, all who were not told off for guard found shelter in the neighbouring villages, only the pioneers were kept at work with their pickaxes. The actions had cost both sides about 600 men, without bringing about any decisive result; but every day was a gain to the defenders.

General von Werder, on the heights north of Héricourt, had received constant reports as to the issue from the head-quarter Staff officers, who had been posted in various places, by which the reinforcements from the reserves could be regulated. Still the reserve ammunition was a cause of anxiety, as a transport announced from Baden had not yet arrived.

General Bourbaki informed his Government that he had taken Montbéliard (of course without the castle), occupied the villages on the west bank of the Lisaine, and that he would attack on the 16th. He had learned from General Billot that the German right wing extended far across Mont-Vaudois,

whence he gathered that they had been considerably reinforced; he estimated the enemy at 80,000 to 100,000 men. Meanwhile he looked forward to obtaining good results by extending the encircling movement further to the west.

January 16th.—At half-past six on the morning of the 16th the Germans once more got under arms in the same positions as the previous day.

The French began the attack with their right wing again. From the loopholed houses they fired on the Landwehr company stationed at the Castle of Montbéliard, causing some loss among the latter as well as among the working gunners. The summons to surrender was disregarded, and the fire of the fort artillery used to such good purpose against two batteries that had just appeared on the neighbouring height, that these were obliged to retire, leaving behind them two guns. Neither could they advance from a new position they had taken up at the farm of Mont-Chevis, where they were reinforced by three batteries, for the fire from La Grange-Dame, although they continued the cannonade until dark. No attempt was made from Montbéliard to break the German line.

Further to the left the reinforced 1st Division of the French XVth Corps advanced on Béthoncourt. At one o'clock the fire of their artillery from Mont-Chevis and Byans obliged a Baden battery to limber

up, and it was then brought to bear on the village. Meanwhile large bodies had been massed in the neighbouring forest, and at three o'clock advanced out of it. General Glümer had already sent reinforcements to the threatened spot. Two determined attempts to carry the place by rushes close up to the position were frustrated by the annihilating artillery and rifle fire of the defenders. A third attack with a whole brigade, at four o'clock, was not even permitted to approach. The losses on the French side were considerable, the snowy field was strewn with the slain. Some unwounded prisoners were also taken.

One Division of the XXIVth French Army Corps had taken up a covered position in the woods behind Byans, and as they had already occupied Bussurel on the previous day, the German line of defence in the rear of the railway embankment appeared to be threatened from the immediate vicinity. The General in command therefore sent General Keller with two Baden fusilier battalions and one heavy battery, from Brévilliers in this direction. The latter joined the two battalions who had been engaged on the slope of the hill since morning. The fire from five of the enemy's batteries was soon silenced by the unerring grenades of the German guns. At noon the French artillery retired from Byans, leaving here

also two guns, which could only be brought away later. The infantry, one Division strong, had only threatened to break the line without proceeding to carry it out.

The XXth Corps brought up two Divisions against the Héricourt—Luze line. A thick fog covered the valley, and the early cannonade was at first scarcely answered by the Germans. To obtain some insight into the plans of the enemy, two companies of the former had advanced on the height west of St.-Valbert, surprising the opponents who were advancing from Byans with so rapid a fire that they turned back. But soon after, at half-past nine, several battalions from Tavey attempted to carry the Mougnot. Two attacks were frustrated by the steady resistance of the Landwehr battalions, and a third attempt directed against the southern defile of Héricourt had no result. About four o'clock the infantry again massed against the Mougnot, but renouncing further attacks under the fire from Mont Salamou, confined themselves till evening to an ineffectual cannonade.

At Chagey two Divisions of the XVIIIth Corps found themselves face to face with the Germans. They did not attempt anything.

The slackness with which, on January 16th, the action against the whole front from Montbéliard to Chagey was conducted, points to the conclusion

that the French were everywhere awaiting the issue of the plan of encircling the German right wing.

This task now devolved on General Crémer. The 2nd Division of the XVIIIth Corps joined him at Etobon.

Two Divisions advanced thence on Chenebier, where General von Degenfeld was with two battalions, two batteries, and one squadron. There could be no doubt as to the result. At eleven o'clock the Penhoat Division of the XVIIIth Corps advanced from the west to encircle northwards, and Crémer's Division, for the purpose of barring the defenders' retreat on Belfort, advanced from the south, the wood of La-Thure covering his approach. The batteries of both Divisions were brought up on its northern edge, where they opened fire. After firing had continued for two hours, the masses of infantry advanced from three sides. Under General Crémer's personal guidance the Baden fusiliers were driven from the south to the north of the village, and as here the surrounding movement through the wood of Montedin had become practicable, General von Degenfeld was, after an obstinate resistance, obliged to begin the retreat in a northerly direction through Frahier. Thence he again turned south-east and took up a position in front of Chalonvillars, on the high-standing mill of Rougeot, where, at six

o'clock, he was joined by Colonel Bayer with strong reinforcements. The French did not pursue; the Crémer Division, which had lost 1000 men, retired, on the contrary, on the wood of La-Thure, while the Penhoat Division confined itself to the occupation of Chenebier.

Accordingly the German line of defence was not broken on this day; still, its extreme right wing had been driven back to within three-quarters of a mile of Belfort.

The fortress celebrated the victory of French arms by a *feu-de-joie*, but made no serious attack on the investing forces, already weakened by the despatch of reinforcements, who, however, on their side, quietly continued the construction of batteries.

General von Werder, desirous above all of setting the scene of action back to his right wing, could only hold in reserve four battalions, four squadrons, and two batteries, bringing up these from the least exposed places, and even from Belfort, to Brévilliers and Mandrevillars. At eight o'clock in the evening General Keller was ordered to retake Chenebier. To this end he left Mandrevillars with two Baden battalions, reached Moulin-Rougeot at midnight, and found Frahier already occupied by Colonel Bayer.

January 17th.—On the morning of the 17th, eight battalions, two squadrons, and four batteries

had assembled there. Three of these detachments advanced on the northern, three on the southern part of Chenebier; the others remained in reserve at the mill, where also three 15-pounders had been set up.

At half-past 4 a.m. the first column, advancing in breathless silence, surprised an outpost of the enemy's at Echevanne, but it was unavoidable that the rifle fire at Chenebier should draw the attention of the French to the danger by which they were menaced. Even north of the place, in the wood, the Germans met with serious resistance; and the danger that in the darkness and the dense undergrowth their troops might fall on each other obliged them to withdraw them to the outer edge of the wood.

The other column, advancing through the valley of the Lisaine, had advanced at the double as soon as the first shots were heard. The 2nd battalion of the 4th Baden Regiment rushed with cheers into the southern part of Chenebier, where a wild fight ensued. But daybreak showed that the heights on the west of the village were strongly occupied, and that columns of all arms were approaching from Ectobon. At 8.30 Colonel Payen was compelled to retire from the half-conquered village, and take up a position at the wood of Féry, to cover the road to Belfort through Chalonvillars; he took with him 400 prisoners.

At the same time the right column, strengthened by a battalion of the reserve, had renewed the attack on the wood, and in a battle which lasted for two hours, with heavy losses on both sides, at last took possession of it. But the attempt to get into the barricaded and strongly-defended village was vain.

A destructive fire met every attack; one single round of mitrailleuse, for instance, killed twenty-one of the assailants. At three o'clock in the afternoon General Keller therefore collected his troops at Frahier, where they were supported by four batteries.

With such inferior strength, and after failing in this attempt, it was useless to think of driving the enemy beyond Chenebier; the only thing to do was to hinder his further advance on Belfort. The end was fully achieved; the French did not pursue. Instead of outflanking the German right, they seemed chiefly concerned for their own left. They defended Chenebier stoutly, but gave up all further offensive movements.

In the expectation of such an attack succeeding, General Bourbaki's plan seems to have been to engage the enemy in front only, and so detain him. Even during that night the Germans were alarmed at Bethoncourt and before Héricourt, while they, on their part, disturbed the French at Bussurel and

in the wood of La-Thure. The infantry fire went on for hours, and numerous detachments had to spend the cold winter's night under arms. In the morning two Divisions of the XVIIIth Corps (French) advanced on Chagey and Luze, supported by the Army Reserve artillery, but they could not come up with the Germans, so several repeated attacks on those places were without result. Firing went on incessantly from one o'clock. In front of Héricourt there was a mutual shelling, and Bussurel, held by the French, was in flames.

To drive the French out of Montbéliard, the town was fired on from La-Grange-Dame and from the Château till the inhabitants begged that it might be spared, declaring that the position was abandoned, which subsequently proved to be false. Ten battalions of the French XVth Corps advanced from the woods in the forenoon, and tried to push on past Montbéliard, but suffered severely from the flanking fire of the heavy guns at La-Grange-Dame; only a few got into the valley of the Lisaine. The western road from Montbéliard, and the hills immediately in front of it, remained in the hands of the French, but the attack ceased at about two in the afternoon.

Further to the south, General von Debschitz's posts in front of Allaine had easily checked the advance of the French detachments.

The Germans were now convinced that no further attack would be attempted.

The condition of the French troops, not yet inured to war, was, in fact, serious. They had been obliged to bivouac in bitter weather, sometimes under arms, and for the most part without food. Their losses were enormous, and the superior officers who were invited to meet the Generals at three in the afternoon, in the neighbourhood of Chagey, expressed their objections to a yet more extensive movement to the left, since supplies would be impossible, and there would be danger of the Germans cutting off the communications from the side of Montbéliard. On this came the news that the heads of General von Manteuffel's Corps had already reached Fontaine-Française, and was near to Gray.

Under these circumstances General Bourbaki thought he must decide on a retreat. He telegraphed to the Government that by the advice of his Generals, and to his deep regret, he had been compelled to take up a position further in the rear, and only hoped that the enemy might follow him. Hence this experienced General can have felt no doubt that his army, after failing in the attack on the Lisaine, could only escape a very critical position by a steady retreat.

January 18th.—On the morning of the 18th the

Germans were in the positions they had secured the day before, and under arms, the French in full force along the whole front. It was a significant fact that they were busily employed on the construction of earthworks. They had evacuated Montbéliard the evening before, and now held the country to the west of the town strongly manned and fortified.

During this day nothing occurred but a shelling and small skirmishes. General Keller had come up on the right German wing with reinforcements, and as the enemy retired to Etobon in the afternoon he was able to re-occupy Chenebier. Further north, Colonel von Willisen again marched on Ronchamp. Coutenans was taken possession of in the centre, and the enemy driven out of Byans by artillery fire; but on the other hand the Germans could not yet penetrate the woods. On the southern bank of the Allaine General von Debschitz's detachment drove the enemy back beyond the line of Exincourt-Croix.

In the three days' fighting on the Lisaine the Germans had lost 1200, the French from 4000 to 5000 men.

In spite of many detachments having to be drafted off, and of the threatening attitude of the enemy, the siege-works were uninterruptedly carried on outside Belfort, and as soon as the investing forces were again reinforced General von

Werder followed the retiring French to Etobon, Saulnot and Arcey.

THE BOMBARDMENT OF PARIS.

(January, 1871.)

In the place of the IInd Corps, now engaged with the Army of the South, the Ist Bavarian Corps had come up, of which Gambetta had said, "Les Bavarois n'existent plus." It had made such good use of its time of rest south of Longjumeau that by the beginning of the New Year it was already 17,500 strong, with 108 guns. It was drawn up between the VIth Prussian Corps and the Wurtemburg Division on both banks of the Seine. The Wurtemburgers extended from Ormesson to the Marne, and between that river and the Sausset were the Saxons, so as to diminish the front of the Guards' Corps now that the Morée was frozen over and afforded no protection.

The observation of such a huge stronghold made great demands on the endurance of the troops.

By extending their works more and more outside Villejuif and Bruyères, the French threatened to outflank the IInd Bavarian Corps. To avert such an attack the VIth was obliged to keep a strong detachment constantly in readiness at L'Hay.

The supports on the south could not in any

way be protected against the fire of the heavy fortress guns, nor the outposts against that of the Chassepôts. They consequently could often not be relieved for several days, and the relief was usually effected at night. The less the success of the French arms in the open field, the more lavish were they in the expenditure of ammunition from their works.

Mont Valérien hurled its giant shells to a distance of from seven to eight kilomètres (from four to five English miles), but this perpetual cannonade, to whose din the ear was soon accustomed, did little damage.

The Artillery Attack on the Southern Front.—Till Mont Avron was carried, the Germans had only been able to bring field guns to bear against the French fortress artillery. But early in January their preparations had at last got so far forward that seventeen batteries, which had long been completed, could be armed with heavy guns against the southern front. A battery stood apart on the left wing in the park of St. Cloud, to the north of Sèvres; four more, close together, on the steep slope of the hill to the west of Meudon; five crowned the plateau of Moulin-de-la-Tour, where the mill, serving to guide the aim of the French, had been blown up. Four more batteries were constructed in a lower position between Fontenay

and Bagneux. Two, between Chevilly and La-Rue, protected the German troops against a flank movement from Villejuif, with the field artillery of the IInd Bavarian and VIth Corps. Covered ways were prepared, and intermediate depôts were supplied with ammunition from the great magazines at Villacoublay.

Colonels von Rieff and von Ramm conducted the artillery attack under General von Kameke and General Prince Hohenlohe; General Schulz directed the engineering works. The men served twenty-four hours in the batteries, and then took two days' rest. The officers had but one day's rest.

The heavy guns were brought into position behind masked batteries on January 3rd by daylight, without any interference; in all the others by night, after the outposts had been driven in. Thus, on the morning of the 4th, 98 guns were ready to open fire: 28 on Issy, 28 on Vanves, and 18 on Montrouge; 10 against the emplacements between the first two forts. But a thick fog hid every object, and it was not till January 5th, at 8.30 in the morning, that the signal was given for opening fire.

The enemy replied at once. There were in Fort Valérien 106 guns, in Issy 90, in Vanves 84, and

in Montrouge 52; there were about 70 in the sectors of the ramparts which came under fire and at Villejuif, 16-cm. guns for the most part; so the attack at first was under great difficulties. But when, at about noon, all the batteries had opened fire, the situation gradually improved, and the greater accuracy of the German aim began to tell. Issy was almost silenced by two o'clock, nine guns were destroyed in Vanves, and had lost thirty gunners; only Montrouge still replied with any vigour. The artillery from the ramparts now opened fire, but the forts never again got the best of it. Some gunboats coming up by Point-du-Jour very soon had to retire.

The field-guns of the IInd Bavarian and VIth Corps were also so effective that no attack was attempted from the works at Villejuif, nor was a shot fired on the batteries at Bagneux. A number of parapet guns and the long-range Chassepôts looted from the French did such good service that the enemy were driven further and further in. The German outposts took possession of the trenches of Clamart, and in the course of the night turned their front towards the forts.

Only a few 15-cm. shells were thrown into the city as a serious announcement; the first thing to be done was to batter down the outworks, and for

some few days all the firing was directed on them. The most serious counter attack was from Montrouge and from a mortar-battery in a very advantageous position behind the high railway embankment to the east of Issy; next, from the south front of the ramparts, almost a mile (German) long in a straight line. Foggy weather on some days necessitated a suspension or entire cessation of firing. But meanwhile the German advanced lines were from 750 to 450 mètres nearer to the fortifications. New batteries were constructed further forward, and armed with thirty-six guns out of those left in the rear.

January 10th.—The French garrison were all this time very active. On January 10th they succeeded in the dark hours in carrying the weakly-occupied position at Clamart. They placed three battalions in the place, and dug a shelter-trench of 1200 mètres towards Châtillon.

January 13th.—The IInd Army of Paris was still encamped outside the town to the east and north, from Nogent to Aubervillers. After some small alarms, on the evening of the 13th some strong detachments advanced, under cover of a hot fire from the forts from Courneuve and Drancy on Le-Bourget. But the troops in occupation were on the alert, and being reinforced at once by several companies, repulsed the repeated attempts

of the French to storm it till two o'clock in the morning.

January 14th.—On this day the French renewed the attempt on Clamart with 500 marine infantry and several battalions of the National Guard. When these last had assembled at the railway-station near, with a great deal of noise, their advance was reported soon after midnight. The fight lasted about an hour, and ended with the retreat, or flight, of the attacking party. Patrols pursued them close up to the trenches of Issy.

The distance was so great that the fire from the ramparts had not yet perceptibly moderated. Battery No. 1, isolated in the park of St.-Cloud, suffered most, being shelled by two batteries, from Point-du-Jour and from Mont-Valérien. The steep slope behind the battery made it easy for the enemy to take aim. The breastwork was repeatedly breached, and it was only the most zealous devotion which enabled the struggle to be continued at this point. The French also poured a heavy fire into batteries Nos. 19 and 21, pushed forward into a particularly dangerous position under Fort Vanves. The fire from the ramparts, coming from a long range to the breastwork, was plunging and breaking through the platforms, and a great many gunners were wounded or killed. The powder-magazine blew up in two of the

batteries, wounding both the officers in command, besides several other superior officers.

To the east of Paris, the fifty-eight German guns placed there after the reduction of Mont-Avron were opposed to 151 of the French. The Germans nevertheless soon proved their superiority; the forts only occasionally opened fire; the French withdrew their outposts to the works, and altogether vacated the peninsula of St.-Maur. By degrees the heavy siege-guns could be removed from hence to the banks of the Morée.

The forts to the south had meanwhile suffered severely. The ruin at Issy was visible to the naked eye; fire broke out repeatedly, and the powder-magazine had to be cleared out at great risk in the night of January 16th. Fort Vanves had lost seventy men; it opened fire usually every morning, but soon became silent. Montrouge, on the contrary, on some days fired as many as 500 rounds from eighteen guns. But here, too, the casemates no longer afforded any shelter, and one of the bastions was a heap of ruins.

In spite of the steady fire from the ramparts, part even of Paris was distressed by the 15-cm. shells. An elevation of 30 degrees, through a peculiar contrivance, sent the shot into the heart of the city. From 300 to 400 shells were fired daily.

Under the pressure of public opinion the Govern-

ment, after repeated deliberations, decided on another great enterprise, to be directed this time against the German batteries at Châtillon. The assembled Generals agreed, indeed, that such sorties could promise no results without the co-operation of an army outside; but, on the 8th, Gambetta had announced the "victory" of the Army of the North at Bapaume, and had promised that both the Armies of the Loire should advance. Hereupon General Trochu advised that they should at least await the moment when the investing army should be weakened by detailing further detachments; but he was opposed by the other members of the Government, especially by Monsieur Jules Favre. He explained that the Maires of Paris were indignant at the bombardment, that the representatives of the city must be allowed some insight into the military situation, and, above all, that negotiations ought long since to have been entered into.

Finally, on January 15th, it was determined that the German lines should be broken through at Montretout, Garches, and Buzanval.

While confusion and dissensions thus prevailed in Paris, the unity of the German nation was proclaimed at Versailles under the Emperor William.

BATTLE OF MONT-VALÉRIEN.

(January 19th.)

The sortie was to be effected on January 19th. On that day, as we have seen, General Faidherbe marched on St.-Quentin, on the way to Paris, and the army which was to make the sortie was standing on the eastern and northern fronts of the capital. The attempt to break through was, however, made on the opposite side. In fact, the peninsula of Gennevilliers was the only ground on which large masses of troops could be deployed without being exposed for hours, while they were being assembled, to the fire of the German artillery.

Two days previously the mobilized National Guard had relieved the divisions told off for the sortie, from the positions they held; 90,000 men in three columns were to attack at the same time. General Vinoy on the left, supported by the fire from the rampart, was to carry the height of Montretout; General Bellemare in the centre was to advance on Garches; General Ducrot on the right, on the Château of Buzanval.

The attack was to begin at six in the morning, but blocks occurred at the bridges of Asnières and Neuilly, as no explicit orders had been issued for crossing them. When, at seven o'clock, the signal

to advance was made by gun-fire from Mont-Valérien, only the head of General Vinoy's force was formed up, the other columns had not yet deployed, and the last detachments tailed back as far as Courbevoix. Before they had reached the rendezvous the left wing was already marching fifteen battalions on St.-Cloud.

These at first met only isolated posts and patrols, eighty-nine men in all, who rushed into the gorge of the work of Montretout, and there made a stand for some time; they then fought their way out with great bravery, but some of them were taken prisoners. There, and on the north of St.-Cloud, the French at once prepared for defence.

The centre column, under General Bellemare, also took possession without difficulty of the hill of Maison-du-Curé.

Not till now, nearly nine o'clock, did the first supports of the German outposts appear on the scene. Till within a short time the patrols had been able to report nothing but thick fog; but reports from the right and left wings announced that a serious attack was threatened on the whole front from St.-Cloud to Bougival. The IVth Corps were called out, and General von Kirchbach joined the 9th Division. To the German right, in the park of St.-Cloud, stood the 17th

Brigade; to the left, behind the Porte-de-Longboyau, the 20th; the other troops of the Corps advanced from their quarters at Versailles and the villages to the north of it on Jardy and Beauregard. The Crown Prince ordered six battalions of the Landwehr Guard and a Bavarian Brigade on Versailles, and himself rode to the Hospice of Brezin; the King went to Marly.

The French meanwhile had seized the foremost houses at Garches, and made their way here and there through the breaches in the east wall into the park of the Château of Buzanval. The 5th Jäger Battalion, supported by single companies of the 58th and 59th Regiments, drove the enemy back on Garches, occupied the cemetery on the north, and still reached the advanced posts at La-Bergerie in good time. The other Divisions under General von Bothmer carried on a persistent fight, by order from head-quarters, on the skirts of the park of St.-Cloud, merely to gain time. By half-past nine they had repulsed an attack by Bellemare's column, stopped the advance of the French up the Rue-Impériale of St.-Cloud, and even returned the attack from the Grille-d'Orléans and the Porte-Jaune. It was in vain that five French battalions tried to storm La-Bergerie. A squad of Engineers had tried with great self-sacrifice to demolish the wall which surrounded the enclosure, but the dynamite was

frozen and would not explode, and the Jägers held the position steadfastly throughout the day.

The attacks of the French had hitherto been attempted with no help from their artillery. That of General Vinoy had been seriously delayed by running into the centre column, and now lingered in the rear to meet a possible attack at Briqueterie. General Bellemare's batteries tried to get up the slope of the hill of Garches, but the exhausted condition of the horses compelled them to take up a position at Fouilleuse. Meanwhile the batteries of the 9th Division (German) came up one by one, and by noon thirty-six guns had opened fire. In St.-Cloud a hot street-fight was going on. General Ducrot alone, on the French right wing, had opened the battle with his strong force of artillery, which he got into position on both sides of Rueil. The tirailleurs then advanced, and made their way through the park of Buzanval to the western wall, but were then driven back by the 50th Regiment of Fusiliers.

At half-past ten the chief attack was made at this point, and supported by part of the central column. Only a non-commissioned officer's detachment met the attack at Malmaison, but at the eastern road from Bougival, at La-Jouchère and Porte-de-Longboyau, it found the 20th Infantry Brigade, which had already been reinforced. General von Schmidt still

kept the reserve of the 10th Division in the rear at Beauregard. A murderous fire from the well-protected German infantry checked the rush of the French, and converted it by mid-day into a steady fire action, the German artillery joining in with great effect. Two batteries of the 10th Division at St.-Michel were strengthened by two of the Guards' brought up from St.-Germain to Louvenciennes; a third advanced on Chatou and drove an armour-plated train on the station north of Rueil to retire rapidly on Nanterre. Four batteries of the IVth Corps finally opened fire from Carrières, without heeding the guns of Valérien, shelling the compact masses of French infantry, who still held Rueil in the rear.

At two o'clock the French decided on renewing the attack. When two of their batteries had bombarded Porte-de-Longboyau a brigade marched on this place, and a second on the western wall of the park of Buzanval; a third followed to give support. Equally bold, but equally unsuccessful, was the attempt of a party of Engineers, one officer and ten men, to blow up part of the wall; they were all killed. The attacking columns had advanced to within 200 paces, but now thirteen companies met them from the German side, and, firing on them at the most effective range, stopped their advance, and presently routed the French

in spite of a valiant effort on the part of their officers.

They found, however, a good support in the park-wall, which had been prepared for defence with great skill and with the utmost rapidity. The attack of some companies from Brezin and La-Bergerie on this wall was repulsed with heavy loss.

But the strength of the French attack was already broken. Even by three o'clock a retreat was observable in the left wing, and as dusk fell they began gradually, in the centre, to withdraw from the heights of Maison-du-Curé. When Colonel von Köthen pursued, with a small force, several battalions indeed fronted, and even attempted a counter-attack; but timely support arrived from La-Bergerie, Garches, and Porte-Jaune, and, seconded by the fire of the batteries, the Germans continued the pursuit. The King's Grenadiers drove the enemy almost as far back as Fouilleuse.

Still, the Germans had not succeeded in repossessing themselves of the works at Montretout. The chief difficulty arose from their having been unable to advance through the town of St.-Cloud. As, however, these positions were indispensable for the protection of the right wing, General von Kirchbach gave orders that they were to be carried either that evening or early next morning.

General von Sandrart decided on immediate

action, and at eight that evening five batteries advanced to the attack. Only a few French were found in the earthworks, and these were taken prisoners; but in the town the struggle was severe. Finally the Germans had to restrict themselves to blockading the houses occupied by the enemy. The French also held the wall of the park of Buzanval all through the night. The Landwehr Guard and the Bavarian Brigade were therefore assigned quarters in Versailles, to form a strong reserve close at hand in case of need on the following day. The remainder of the troops withdrew into their former quarters.

At half-past five General Trochu had ordered a retreat. He perceived that a prolonged struggle could not succeed, especially as the National Guard were mutinous. The brave defenders of St.-Cloud were forgotten in these orders; they did not surrender till the day after, when artillery opened fire on the houses they had occupied. Even the park-wall was held till the following morning.

The French attack of January 19th had failed before reaching the enemy's main position. The reserves in readiness on the German side had not been brought into action. The Vth Corps alone had driven in an enemy of four times its own strength. It lost 40 officers and 570 men; the French loss in killed and wounded was 145 officers

and 3423 men, besides 44 officers and 458 men taken prisoners.

When the fog lifted, at about eleven o'clock on the morning of the 20th, they were seen retreating on Paris, in long columns, across the peninsula of Gennevilliers.

THE BOMBARDMENT OF PARIS TILL THE ARMISTICE.

After the repulse of this last struggle for release on the part of the garrison, the bombardment was renewed on the north as well as the south and west.

The siege-guns no longer needed against the smaller fortresses and on the Marne were parked to this end at Villiers-le-Bel. The Army of the Meuse had prepared abundant material for constructing batteries, and requisitioned above 600 waggons. Already twelve batteries were placed in the lines between Le-Bourget and Lac-d'Enghien, and the guns were mostly brought up at night. By January 21st eighty-one heavy guns were ready for action, and Colonel Bartsch opened fire at nine that morning on La-Briche, Double-Couronne, and Fort-de-l'Est.

The forts, now exposed to the fire of 143 heavy guns, replied briskly, and on the following day the thick weather prevented the Germans from

opening fire again till the afternoon. But the ground in front was clear of the French, and the outposts of the German Guards and IVth Corps took possession of Villetaneuse and Temps-Perdu.

In the course of the night, fire was opened on St.-Denis, with every endeavour to spare the Cathedral, and many places were set in flames.

By the 23rd the steady fire of the Germans had perceptibly reduced the vigour of the French artillery. La-Briche was silenced, and the other forts only fired an occasional salvo.

During the night of the 25th four batteries were advanced to within from 1800 to 1200 mètres of the enemy's outworks. Engineering works could now be begun, and a row of new batteries was constructed, for which, however, there was never any need.

The effect of this six days' bombardment was decisive.

The forts had suffered greatly. On this side—unlike the south front—they lacked the support of the ramparts behind them, and they had, too, no bomb-proof space. The temporary galleries were shattered by shell, the powder-magazines were in the greatest danger, and the garrisons were devoid of shelter. The inhabitants of St.-Denis fled to Paris in crowds, and the insufficient security of the

battered works were no longer a protection against assault if the city held out any longer.

The attack on the north front had cost the Germans one officer and twenty-five men; the French stated their loss at 180.

The fire of the forts on the east front was kept under, and the Wurtemburg Field Artillery was enough to prevent the French from again getting a foothold on the peninsula of St.-Maur.

The south front meanwhile suffered more and more from the steady bombardment. The ramparts and the mortar-pits behind the railway were still active, but in the forts the barracks were in ruins, partly battered in and partly burnt down, and the men had to take shelter in the empty powder-magazines. The ramparts were too much choked for free circulation, the parapets afforded no protection. In Vanves the gaps were filled up with sand-bags; in Issy, on the southern curtain, five blocks of casemates in the outer wall were demolished. Even the isolated ravelin-walls of Vanves and Montrouge were destroyed, forty guns dismounted, and seventy gun-carriages wrecked.

The whole situation of France, political and military, and above all that of Paris, was such as to cause the Government the gravest anxiety.

Since the return of Monsieur Thiers from his

diplomatic tour it was certain that no mediatory influence would be exerted by any foreign power. The sufferings of the capital were now very great. Scarcity and high prices had for some time been a burthen to the inhabitants; their provisions were exhausted, and even the army stores of the garrison had been encroached on. Fuel was lacking in the bitter cold, and petroleum was an inefficient substitute for gas. When the long-deferred bombardment began on the south side of Paris, the people took refuge in the cellars or fled to the remoter quarters of the town; and when the northern side was also shelled the inhabitants of St.-Denis crowded into the capital.

The great sortie of the 19th had proved a total failure, and no relief was to be hoped for from outside since Gambetta had sent news of the defeat at Le-Mans. The Paris Army, of whose inactivity he complained, was reduced to a third of its original strength by cold, sickness, and desertion. The horses had to be killed to provide meat for the inhabitants, and General Trochu declared any further offensive movements to be quite hopeless; the means even of passive resistance were exhausted.

Hitherto the Government had been able to keep the populace in a good humour by highly-coloured reports, but now the disastrous state of affairs could no longer be concealed. Everything they could do was wrong.

There was a large body of people in Paris who were but little affected by the general distress. Those members of the civilian class who had been equipped for the defence of their country were fed and well paid by the authorities, without having too much to do for it. They were joined by all the dubious social elements, whose interest it was to foment disorder; these had been quite content with the state of affairs as they had been on September 4th, and these formed the mob which was presently to assume the hideous aspect of the Commune. Already some popular gatherings had been only dispersed by force of arms, and even a part of the National Guard had given signs of some mutinous outbreak. The revolutionary clubs, too, supported by the press, demanded further active measures, even a sortie *en masse* of all the inhabitants of Paris. Thus the feeble Government, dependent as it was on popular favour alone, was under pressure from the impossible demands of an ignorant mob on the one hand, and, on the other, the inexorable coercion of facts.

There was absolutely no escape but by capitulation; every delay increased the necessity, and left them at the mercy of harder terms. Unless all the railways were at once thrown open for the delivery of supplies from a considerable distance, the horrors of famine were imminent for more than two million souls; and later it might not be possi-

ble to meet it. Yet no one dared utter the fatal word surrender, no one would take the responsibility of the inevitable.

A great council of war was held on the 21st. As all the elder Generals pronounced any further offensive measures to be quite impossible, it was proposed that the younger military authorities should be consulted, but no decision was arrived at. As, however, some one must be made answerable for every misfortune, General Trochu, hitherto the most popular member of the Government, was degraded from his position as Governor, and the chief command was entrusted to General Vinoy. General Ducrot resigned his command.

All this did nothing to improve the situation, so on the 23rd, Monsieur Jules Favre made his appearance at Versailles to negotiate at any rate for an armistice.

The German Emperor was ready to meet this request; but of course some guarantee must be given that the capital, after obtaining supplies, would not renew its resistance. All the forts were to be given up, including Mont-Valérien and the city of St.-Denis, and the disarmament of the ramparts was demanded and acceded to.

All hostilities were to be suspended on the evening of the 26th, so far as Paris was concerned, and all ways of ingress to be thrown open. A general

armistice of twenty-one days was to begin from the 31st of January, exclusive, however, of the departments of Doubs, Jura, and Côte-d'or, and of the fortress of Belfort, where, at the time, operations were being carried on, in which both sides were equally hopeful of success.

This armistice gave the Committee of National Defence time enough to call a freely-elected National Assembly together at Bordeaux, whose business it would be to decide whether the war should be continued, or on what conditions peace could be concluded. The election of the deputies was unimpeded and uninfluenced even in the parts of the country occupied by German troops.

The regular forces of the Paris garrison, troops of the line, marines, and Gardes-Mobiles were to lay down their arms at once; only 12,000 men and the National Guard were to retain them for the preservation of order. The garrison were interned for the time of the armistice; afterwards they were to be regarded as prisoners. As to their transfer to Germany, where every possible place was already overflowing with prisoners, that question was postponed in expectation of a probable peace.

The forts were occupied on the 29th without opposition.

The French Army gave up 602 guns, 1,770,000

stand of arms, and above 1000 ammunition-waggons; the fortress surrendered 1362 heavy guns, 1680 gun-carriages, 860 limbers, 3,500,000 cartridges, 4000 hundred-weight of powder, 200,000 shells, and 100,000 round-shot.

The blockade of Paris, which had lasted 132 days, was over, and the greater part of the German forces detained outside the walls were released to end the war in the open field.

VI.

THE PROGRESS OF THE WAR IN THE SOUTH AND WEST.

The Army of the South under General von Manteuffel.

The two Army Corps under General von Manteuffel consisted altogether of fifty-six battalions, twenty squadrons, and 168 guns. When he arrived at Châtillon-sur-Seine on January 12th, the IInd Corps was on the right, and the VIIth on the left of Noyers, extending to Montigny over ten miles (German). One brigade, under General von Dannenberg, which had already had several frays with portions of the French Army of the Vosges, had advanced on Vilaines to cover the right flank.

Several good roads led from these quarters converging on Dijon; to Vesoul, on the contrary, the roads were bad, and deep in snow down the southern slopes of the wild plateau of Langres. The Commander-in-Chief, nevertheless, took this line of march, to afford General von Werder indirect assistance at least, as soon as possible, by coming up in the rear of the enemy who threatened him.

The advance was between the two towns of Dijon and Langres, both strongly occupied by the French. Wooded heights and deep ravines separated the columns and prevented any mutual support; each had to provide for its own safety on every side. The troops had severe fatigues to encounter, and badly as they needed rest none could be granted, nor could the evil plight of their boots and the horses' shoes be in any way remedied.

On January 14th the march began in a thick fog and bitter cold, along roads frozen as smooth as glass.

To keep up the supplies was absolutely essential, and the 8th Brigade had from the first to be left in the rear to secure the all-important railway-line from Tonnerre by Nuits and Châtillon, until communications could be established *viâ* Epinal.

On the very first day the advanced guard of the VIIth had a fight before Langres. A detachment of the garrison of 15,000 men was repulsed on the fortress with the loss of a standard, and a detachment was therefore left behind to observe the place. Under its protection the Corps marched past the fortress next day, while the IInd advanced as far as the Ognon.

The weather changed during the night of the 15th. Fourteen degrees of frost (Centigrade) gave way to storm and rain. The water lay on the

frozen roads, and it was with the greatest difficulty that the VIIth Corps reached Prauthoy and the IInd Moloy, closing up to the left.

On the 18th the left wing advanced on Frettes and Champlitte, to the south-east, the right assembled at Is-sur-Tille, and its advanced guard, after marching fifty kilomètres (thirty-one English miles), reached the bridges at Gray. On the flank and rear of the Corps, there had been some fighting, but the heavy march across the mountains was over and they were in the cultivated valley of the Saône.

General von Manteuffel had already received news of the happy issue of the first day's fighting on the Lisaine. Later telegrams from General von Werder reported that the French Army of the East would probably be obliged to retire under difficulties, and the German general at once determined to cut off its retreat on the Doubs below Besançon.

The defeated French army was still greatly superior in number to the German force. And the troops must again be called upon for severe exertions. They must again cross a thinly-populated and mountainous country, where it would be a matter of great difficulty to procure food and the shelter needful during the bitter winter nights. They must also leave hostile forces in the rear, under very insufficient observation at Langres, Dijon, and Auxonne. However, in spite of every obstacle

the advance in this new direction was begun on the 19th.

The first difficulty might be the crossing of the Saône, here very deep and sixty mètres wide, and full of drifting ice; but the advanced guard of the IInd Corps had found Gray abandoned by the French and both the bridges uninjured, and had taken possession of the place. The head of the VIIth Corps crossed the river by the railway-bridge at Savayeux, which was found intact, and by a pontoon-bridge thrown across higher up.

On the following day both Corps advanced in a southerly direction, the VIIth on Gy, the IInd on Pesmes. Here they crossed the Ognon after driving off by artillery fire a French detachment which tried to oppose the construction of the bridge.

On the 21st, the advanced guard found Dôle occupied by the enemy. General von Koblinski attacked at once; in spite of a violent street-fight, in which the townspeople took part, the Grenadiers of the 2nd Regiment made their way through the town and seized a train on the other side of 230 waggons of provisions and necessaries, intended for Besançon, and left standing in the railway-station. As the Doubs was thus crossed at this point, so the VIIth Corps forced a passage across the Ognon at Marmay and Pin.

General von Werder had been told off to follow

close on the heels of the French retreat, and while he held his own in front of the XIVth Corps, the 2nd Baden Brigade had advanced on the right wing on Etobon, while Colonel von Willisen and his twelve squadrons had marched on by Lure. On the left, Colonel von Zimmermann with the East-Prussian Landwehr had driven the French out of Ste.-Marie. These detachments everywhere found cast-away arms and portions of equipment, and hundreds willingly gave themselves up as prisoners.

During the next few days General von Werder effected a general change of front to the left and south. The right wing held Villersexel, and it was the left wing only that met the enemy at Isle-sur-Doubs, and afterwards in greater numbers, at Clerval and Baume-les-Dames.

General Bourbaki had quitted the Lisaine on the 18th. The XXIVth Corps (French) alone were left on the Doubs with orders to defend the defiles in the steep mountain-path of Lomont on the east of Clerval, towards the north; all the other troops withdrew between the Doubs and the Ognon, with Cremer's Division as a rearguard. The Ognon might have formed a natural cover for the right flank of the French army, and orders had been given for the destruction of all the bridges; but we have seen how little they had been obeyed.

On the 21st the XVth and XXth Corps had

arrived in the neighbourhood of Baume-les-Dames, the XVIIIth at Marchaux; and here, having Besançon close in his rear, General Bourbaki was anxious to await the next step of the enemy. In order to concentrate his forces more completely, the commandant of the place was desired to send up all the battalions he could spare of the Gardes-Mobiles, on Blamont, so as to release the XXIVth Corps. Nine battalions of the mobilized National Guard had before this reached Besançon, and might have relieved the Corps, but they were armed with Enfield rifles, for which there was no ammunition in store. Thus they would only have added to the mouths to fill, and General Rolland had simply sent them back again. The Commissary-General declared that it was impossible for him to continue any longer to bring up the supplies ordered for the maintenance of the army, and what proved decisive was the news received this day that not only was the line of the Ognon lost, but that the Germans had crossed the Doubs. Under these circumstances the French Commander-in-Chief determined to continue his retreat on Besançon and there cross to the southern bank of Doubs, so as not to be compelled to give battle with the river in his rear. The train was sent off during the night, but above all things the XVth Corps was ordered at once to take possession

of Quingey, and hold that position to the last man, to keep open the communications of the Corps with the interior. All the other Corps were to concentrate round Besançon, even the XXIVth, which consequently gave up the Lomont passes.

General Bourbaki reported his situation to the Minister of War, who held out hopes of support from that portion of the XVth Corps now remaining on the Loire. Assistance could have been more easily and effectually given from Dijon.

The Government had concentrated a very considerable force on that town to replace Crémer's Division which had joined the Army of the East, and to defend the ancient capital of Burgundy as a *point-d'appui* for the operations of General Bourbaki. A Corps of 20,000 men was to hold the place; a very inappropriately-named Army of the Vosges, more than 40,000 strong, was to manœuvre in the field. But all this did little to hinder the toilsome advance of the Germans over the mountains. The detachments forming a Corps of observation allowed themselves to be driven in by General von Kettler, who followed the movements of the Corps on the right flank, and they retired on Dijon.

Colonel Bombonnel, at Gray, urgently but vainly begged for assistance to enable him to defend the passages of the Saône; his applications were re-

fused because Dijon was in too great peril, and it was not till the Prussians had already crossed the river that Garibaldi began to move.

He advanced on the 19th in three columns on Is-sur-Tille, where only a part of the 4th Infantry Division was now left. But he moved forward only a mile (German). Garibaldi did no more than observe a reconnaissance party which advanced to meet him, from the hill at Messigny, and he then retired on Dijon with his troops, to the sound of the Marseillaise.

However, at General von Manteuffel's head-quarters, the enemy was held in too small estimation, when General von Kettler was simply ordered to go and "take Dijon."

The city had been fortified with the greatest care. Strong earthworks, and other works of defence protected it to the northward; more especially had Talant and Fontaine-les-Dijon been converted into two independent forts and armed with heavy guns which commanded every approach on that side. The whole constituted a position which could be held against a much larger force than the five and a half battalions of the 8th Brigade with which General Kettler advanced to the attack.

Fighting at Dijon, January 21st and 22nd.—They had reached Turcey and St.-Seine, and on the 21st advanced in two columns from the

west on Dijon, still three miles away from Is-sur-Tille on the north; Major von Conta was approaching with a small reinforcement. Some companies of volunteers indeed, the "Franctireurs de la Mort," the "Compagnie de la Revanche," and others, had been driven out of the villages on the way without any great difficulty, and beyond the deep ravine of the Suzon; the village of Plombieres on the right had been defended with spirit and stormed, and Daix carried on the left; but in front of the fortified position of the French, and under fire of their heavy batteries, the bold advance was forced to come to a standstill. Major von Conta had also marched on, through continuous fighting, but failed to come up with the brigade before dark. General von Kettler, recognizing the enormous superiority of the French, finally restricted himself to repulsing their sorties.

The French had lost seven officers and 430 men in prisoners alone; but the battle had also cost the brigade nineteen officers and 322 men. The troops had performed a severe march in bad weather, along heavy roads, and had no hot food either before or after the fight; and ammunition, too, could only be supplied by a column which was expected to come up next day. Nevertheless General von Kettler did not hesitate to remain for the night in the position he had gained, imme-

diately in front of the enemy, and then to seek quarters in the nearest villages.

The French allowed him to do so without any serious opposition. Such complete inactivity made General von Kettler suspect that the main body of the French had perhaps retired by Auxonne to the support of the Army of the East, and he determined to bring them back on Dijon by a renewed attack.

On the 23rd at eleven o'clock, by a flank march along the enemy's front, after his advanced guard had routed a detachment of Gardes-Mobiles, he reached the farm of Valmy on the Langres road, and advanced on that place with his two batteries against the village of Pouilly, which was walled and strongly occupied. Here, as was almost always the case when they had buildings to defend, the French made a stout resistance. The 61st Regiment had to storm each house in turn, and it was not till the château was in flames that the strong party of defenders, who had taken refuge in the top storey, surrendered to the Germans.

Beyond this place the enemy were found to have intrenched themselves between Talant, which had been regularly fortified, and a large factory-building on the high-road. Here the German advance was checked till the remainder of the regiment came up from Valmy, and the

defenders were driven in at various points, and back on the suburb.

It was evident that the French were still at Dijon in full force; but now unfortunately a tragic episode took place, for the storming of the factory was insisted on—a huge building, almost impregnable for infantry unaided. When all the senior officers had been killed, a first-lieutenant, whose horse had been shot and he himself wounded, took the command of the 2nd battalion. No sooner had the 5th company, only forty strong, appeared from the neighbouring quarry, than they came under a hot fire from all sides. Their leader was at once wounded, and the sergeant who carried the colours fell dead after a few steps; so did the second-lieutenant and the battalion adjutant, who again raised the standard. It was passed from hand to hand, first to the officers then to the men; every bearer fell. The brave Pomeranians nevertheless rushed on the building, but there was no entrance on that side, and at last the under-officer retreated on the quarries with the remnant of the little band. Here, for the first time, the colours were missed. Of their own accord they went out again in the darkness to seek them, but only one man returned unwounded. It was not till afterwards that they were found by the French, shot to ribbons, in a pool of blood, under the dead.

These were the only German colours lost throughout the war, and only thus were these lost.

Of the French, eight officers and 150 men were taken prisoners, and the brigade had again lost sixteen officers and 362 men. It mustered at Pouilly, and remained under arms till eight o'clock to be prepared for possible pursuit; then quarters were found in the neighbouring villages.

The Movements of the Army of the South.—The order to take Dijon could not be executed; but the bold advance of this small brigade had reduced the hostile army to inactivity, so that General von Manteuffel could advance unopposed.

His intention was to reach the enemy's line of retreat to the south of Besançon.

There were but few roads to the south of France available for troops, through the ravined and terraced hills of the western Jura. The most direct connection was by the road and railway to Lous-le-Saulnier, on which Quingey and Byans were important points to guard. Further to the east, by a wide détour, a road runs by Ornans, Salins and Champagnole to St. Laurent and Morez.

On the other hand, several ways centre in Pontarlier, traversing the rocky passes, peculiar to that formation, known locally as Cluses; they are breaches in the long ridge connecting the lateral valleys. From Pontarlier one road only runs past

Mouthe, and in suspicious proximity to the Swiss frontier.

January 22nd.—On this day the advanced guard of the 13th Division marched from Audeux to St.-Vit, and, after breaking up the railway and plundering several loaded waggons, down the river on Dampierre. On their way four bridges over the Doubs were found uninjured and were occupied. The advanced guard of the 14th Division advanced from Emagny to observe Besançon. The IInd Corps, diverging on Dôle, sent reconnoitring parties out beyond the river.

January 23rd.—The concentric movement of all the contingents of the German army was continued.

General Debschitz, approaching from the north, in passing Roches found only the abandoned camping place of the XXIVth French Corps. The 4th Reserve Division occupied L'Isle without opposition, and met no resistance till it reached Clerval and Baume.

On the Ognon the Baden Division drove the French out of Montbazon.

In the centre of the army the VIIth Corps pushed the advanced guard of the 14th Division forward on Dannemarie, near Besançon. A fight ensued which resulted only in a cannonade, lasting till night. The 13th Division, on the contrary, which had

crossed the Doubs at Dampierre, advanced on Quingey.

Only one French brigade had been able to come up by railway for want of rolling-stock, and the last trains were received at the Byans station with Prussian shell. These troops were in such evil plight that they were unable even to place outposts. They abandoned Quingey almost without a struggle, and their retreat, almost a flight, on Besançon and beyond the Loue, stopped the advance of reinforcements already on the way. Thus 800 prisoners and a train of 400 convalescents fell into the hands of the Prussian advanced guard, who at once broke up the railway at Abbans-dessous.

On the right wing, the head of the IInd Corps had advanced in the valley of the Loue on the southern bank. Various cuttings on this road had been prepared for defence, but were undefended. It was not till it reached Villers-Farlay that it met a strong detachment of the enemy.

On the evening of this day, of the French forces the XXth Corps was on the north of Besançon and the XVIIIth on the west, at the distance of about a German mile. Cavalry, artillery and the train were passing through the town or encamped on the glacis of the fortress. The XXIVth Corps was on the march hither, and the 2nd and 3rd Divisions of the XVth were in possession of the southern

bank of the Doubs at Baume and Larnod; but the 1st Division had not succeeded in holding Quingey. Thus the most direct and important line of communications of the army was cut, and its position, by this fresh disaster, seriously aggravated. Projects and counsels from Bordeaux, on which it was impossible to act, abounded, but did not mend matters; and on the 24th General Bourbaki summoned the superior officers to a council of war.

January 24th.—The Generals declared that they had scarcely half their number of men under arms, and these were more inclined to fly than to fight. General Pallu alone thought he might answer for the men of the army reserve. The Commissary-General reported that, unless they could seize the stores in the place, the supplies in hand would last for four days at most. General Billot was in favour of attempting to fight a way through to Auxonne, but he declined to take the command in chief, which was offered him. The exhaustion of the troops and their insubordination, which was evidently increasing, gave little hope of the success of offensive operations. So there was no alternative but to retire on Pontarlier, as the Commander-in-chief had proposed.

This, even, was seriously threatened. To clear the country to the northward, General Bourbaki ordered the XXIVth Corps to advance once more

and hold the passes of the Lomont. On the south the XVth was to defend the deep mountain ravine of the Loue, and General Crémer was more especially to cover the retreat of the army on the right flank, which was most threatened. For this difficult task a division of the XXth Corps was placed under his command, as well as his own force, and the army reserve, as the most trustworthy of the troops. The XVIIIth and the remainder of the XXth were to await marching-orders at Besançon.

At the German head-quarters, where of course the plans of the French could not be known, various contingencies had to be reckoned on.

If the French remained at Besançon there would be no need to attack them there; the place was not adapted for a large army, and its supplies could not hold out long. That they would again attempt to advance northwards was scarcely likely; they would be leaving all their resources in their rear, and must encounter the larger part of the XVth Corps (German) on the banks of the Ognon.

An attempt to cut a way past Dijon seemed on the whole more probable. But this would be opposed at St.-Vit by the 13th Division, at Pesmes by Colonel von Willisen's detachment, and finally by General von Kettler.

Thus the retreat on Pontarlier seemed the most likely course; and to hinder their advance on that

side must be the duty of the IInd Corps, so long as the VIIth was employed in observing the main body of the French collected at Besançon, and in checking their sorties on both sides of the river.

The Commander-in-Chief therefore confined himself to giving general instructions to the superior officers, expressly authorizing them to act on their own judgment under such circumstances as could not be foreseen.

General von Werder was ordered to advance by Marnay and obtain touch with the Baden Division and Von der Goltz's Brigade, and distribute them in the first instance along the right bank of the Doubs. The 4th Reserve Division was to restore the bridges at L'Isle and Baume, and cross over to the left bank. Colonel von Willisen joined the VIIth Corps to supply the lack of cavalry. The IInd Corps was assembled behind Villers-Farlay.

January 25th.—Extensive reconnaissances were arranged for next day. That of the VIIth Corps resulted in a sharp skirmish at Vorges. The head of the IInd Corps met the French at Salins and at Arbois, but found that they had not yet reached Poligny.

January 26th.—The advanced guard of the IInd Corps marched on Salins. The forts of St.-André and Belin, on high ground near that town, fronted on Switzerland, but they also commanded

the plain to the south and west in the enemy's line of march. Salins is a strong key commanding the road to St.-Laurent, and as long as it could be held would at the same time secure the retreat of the columns marching from Besançon on Pontarlier.

The two field-batteries of the advanced guard could, of course, do little against the heavy guns of the forts; but the Fusiliers of the 2nd Regiment advanced in rushes of small detachments up the narrow ravine, scaled the steep walls on that side, and, supported by the two battalions of Grenadiers, forced their way, by about half-past two, into the railway-station and suburb of St.-Pierre. They lost 3 officers and 109 men.

Soon after this General von Koblinski arrived, *viâ* St.-Thiébaud, with the 42nd Regiment. As, in consequence of the representations of the *Maire*, the commandant had abandoned the idea of bombarding the town, the advanced guard could take up its quarters there; the main body of the 3rd Division retreated from under the fire of the forts on Monchard, and the defile was closed against all-comers. It would have to be turned on the south.

On that side the 4th Division already occupied Arbois, its head marching on Pont-d'Héry; it found Poligny and Champagnole on the right still unoccupied.

The VIIth Corps had reconnoitred both banks of the Doubs, and had found the enemy in strong positions at Busy and at Vorges.

The 4th Reserve Division advanced along the southern bank as far as St.-Juan-d'Adam, near Besançon; the remainder of the XIVth Corps marched on Etuz and Marnay.

General von Kettler's report of the fighting on the 21st and 23rd determined General von Manteuffel to make a renewed attempt on Dijon. He detailed General Hann von Weyhern to this duty, placing him in command of the 8th Brigade, with Colonel von Willisen's troops and Degenfeld's Baden Brigade.

On the French side, General Bressolles had started on the 24th, in obedience to orders, to take possession of the passages of the Doubs and the defiles of Lomont. At first, with d'Aries' Division, he had marched on Baume; but as d'Aries could not succeed even in driving in the German outposts from Pont-les-Moulins, he retired on Vercel. In consequence of this, on the morning of the 26th, Carré's Division, which had found the defiles of the Lomont unoccupied, also retired on Pierre-Fontaine. Comagny's Division had already retreated on Morteau, and was quietly making its way on Pontarlier.

General Bourbaki was greatly disturbed by this

failure of his right wing; more than was needful, perhaps, since, in fact, only one German division stood to the north of him, which at most could drive his rearguard back on Pontarlier, while the main force of the enemy threatened him far more seriously on the west. He nevertheless ordered a renewed advance, on the 26th, of the XXIVth Corps, which was now to be supported by the XVIIIth. But the march through Besançon of the XVIIIth Corps alone, over streets covered with ice, took up the whole of the day which should have been devoted to the attack, so that nothing came of the scheme.

The Army Reserve had reached Ornans, and had formed up. The two other divisions advanced on the road to Salins, but heard, while on the march, that the Germans had just carried that place. They therefore occupied Déservillers and Villeneuve-d'Amont, to keep open the roads from thence to Pontarlier.

The War Minister, meanwhile, had emphatically refused his consent to the general retreat of the army, without any regard to the imperative necessities of the case.

The military dilettanteism which fancied it could control the army from Bordeaux is characteristically expressed in a telegram of the afternoon of the 25th. Monsieur de Freycinet gives it as his

"firm conviction"[1] that if General Bourbaki would collect his troops, and, if necessary, come to an understanding with Garibaldi, he would be strong enough to fight his way out, either by Dôle, or by Monchard, or by Gray, or by Pontarlier (north of Auxonne). The choice was left to him.

Still more amazing was the suggestion that if, indeed, the state of the troops prohibited a long march, they should take the railway from Chagey, under the eye, no doubt, of the pursuing enemy.

But such communications could only avail to shake the brave commander's self-confidence. The disastrous reports which poured in from all sides, and the state of the troops, which he had seen for himself as the XVIIIth Corps marched through the town, crushed his last hope and led him to attempt his own life.

The Commander-in-Chief had of course to bear the blame of the total failure of a campaign planned by Freycinet; his dismissal from the command was already on its way. General Clinchant was appointed in his stead, and under these disastrous circumstances took the command of the army.

All the Generals were, no doubt, most anxious to avoid bringing their weary and dispirited troops face to face with the enemy. Every line of retreat was closed, excepting only that on Pontarlier.

[1] Conviction bien arrêtée.

The new Commander-in-Chief had no choice but to carry out the plans of his predecessor. He at once ordered the further march. He himself proceeded to Pontarlier. In that strong position he hoped to be able at least to give the troops a short rest. No large body of the Germans had been met with so far, the ammunition columns had got safely through, and if they could but reach the defiles of Vaux, Les-Planches and St.-Laurent before the enemy, and hold them, there was still a possibility of escape to the southwards.

On the evening of the 27th, Poullet's Division was at Levier, nearest to the Germans, the two other Divisions under General Crémer, with the XVth and XXth Corps, were échelonned on the road between Ornans and Sombacourt; the XVIIIth Corps was alone on the eastern road by Nods. The XXIVth, in a miserable condition, extended to Montbenoît, with its head at Pontarlier; two Divisions were still in Besançon.

On this day General von Fransecky collected the main body of the IInd Corps at Arbois, and reinforced General du Trossel's lines at Pont d'Héry.

The XIVth Corps relieved the 14th Division of the VIIth Corps at St.-Vit; this advanced to the right of the 13th Division into the ravine of the Loue, which the French had already abandoned.

On the north, General von Debschitz held Blamont

and Pont-du-Roide, while General von Schmeling kept watch on Besançon from St.-Juan, and General von der Goltz marched on Arbois to form a reserve.

January 28th.—Suspecting that the French were already on the march by Champagnole on St.-Laurent, General Fransecky, to cut off that line of retreat, advanced on the following day in a southerly direction with the IInd Corps.

General du Trossel reached Champagnole without opposition, and sent his cavalry down the road on Pontarlier. Lieutenant-Colonel von Guretzky arrived at Nozeroy with a squadron of the 11th Dragoons, and found the place occupied; but he seized fifty-six commissariat-waggons, and stole the field treasure-chest, taking the escort prisoners.

The 5th and 6th Brigades advanced on Poligny and Pont-du-Navoy.

The 13th Division of the VIIth Corps, being relieved at Quingey by the Baden troops, assembled at La-Chapelle, while the 14th advanced on Déservillers. Its head, at Bolandoz, did not meet the enemy, but found his camp-fires still smouldering, so that the main body of the French was not overtaken that day.

General Clinchant had in fact moved his Corps closer on Pontarlier. But it soon became evident

that supplies could not be counted on for any long stay. General Crémer received orders that night to advance at once on Les Planches and St.-Laurent with three cavalry regiments, already on the road to Mouthe. The mountain-roads were deep in snow, but he reached the points designated, by a forced march, by the next afternoon. The XXIVth Corps and a brigade of Poullet's Division followed next day, this last placing two battalions to occupy Bonnevaux at the entrance to the defile of Vaux. On the evening of the 28th the rest of the French army was distributed as follows: the XVIIIth Corps was behind the Drugeon at Houtaud close before Pontarlier; the 1st Division of the XVth had advanced to Sombacourt, beyond the stream, the 3rd Division was in the town. On the left the 2nd and 3rd Divisions of the XXth Corps held the villages from Chaffois to Frasne, and on the right the army reserve occupied Byans.

General von Manteuffel had ordered a general advance for the 29th on Pontarlier, where the French at last must certainly be found.

January 29th.—General Koblinsky of the IInd Corps, had set out from Poligny before daylight. When he reached Champagnole and had assembled the whole of the 5th Brigade he advanced at about seven o'clock. General du Trossel with the 7th Brigade reached Censeau without finding the enemy.

On the right Colonel von Wedell had marched from Pont-du-Navoy on Les-Planches with four battalions of the 6th Brigade. He found only dismounted troopers, posts probably left by General von Crémer, who were easily dispersed by the Jägers. Detachments were then sent out on all sides, and everywhere met with scattered troops; but at Foncine-le-Bas the head of the XXIVth Corps was found, and Colonel von Wedell now cut off their line of retreat, the last that had been left open.

With the rest of the IInd Corps General von Hartmann marched unopposed on Nozeroy.

The 14th Division of the VIIth Corps had not received the order to advance on Pontarlier till somewhat late; it did not start from Déservillers till the afternoon, and only reached Levier at three o'clock, where, at the same hour, the head of the 13th Division also arrived from Villeneuve-d'Amont, the state of the roads having greatly delayed them on the march.

The advanced guard of three battalions, half a squadron, and one battery, had met only stragglers on their way, and General von Zastrow commanded them to advance on the Drugeon. Through the woods on the left of the road compact detachments of the French were retiring on Sombacourt, and Major von Brederlow, with the 1st battalion of the

77th Regiment, made a flank movement on that village. The 2nd company, under Captain von Vietinghof, made its way in by Sept-Fontaines with loud cheers, and was at first surrounded by a strong force of the enemy; however, the other companies soon came to its assistance. The 1st Division of the XVth Corps (French) was completely routed without the reserve close at hand in Byans having come to its support. Fifty officers, including two generals, were taken prisoners with 2700 men; ten guns, seven mitrailleuses, forty-eight waggons, 319 horses and 3500 stand of arms fell into the hands of the Hanoverian battalion which was left in occupation of Sombacourt.

The remainder of the advanced guard had meanwhile advanced on Chaffois, where the road opens out from the mountain gorge into the broad valley of the Drugeon. The place was occupied, as we have seen, by the 2nd Division of the XXth Corps (French).

Colonel von Cosel attacked at once. Three companies of the 53rd Regiment surprised the French picquet and seized the first houses in the village, but then the mass of the French XVIIIth Corps stopped their further advance. By degrees all the forces at hand became engaged, as well as the reinforcements brought up from the main body of the 14th Division. The fight had lasted with great

obstinacy for an hour and a half, when suddenly the French ceased firing and laid down their arms. They appealed to the armistice already agreed on.

Monsieur Jules Favre had, in fact, telegraphed to Bordeaux at a quarter-past eleven on the night of the 28th, that an armistice of twenty-one days had been concluded, without adding that, with his consent, the three eastern departments had been excepted from it. The information, in this imperfect form, was transmitted to the civil authorities by the Chambers at 12.15 at noon of the 29th; but Monsieur Freycinet did not forward it to the military authorities, whom it principally concerned, till 3.30 in the afternoon.

Thus could General Clinchant, in all good faith, transmit to General Thornton, in command of the Division at Chaffois, a message which, as regarded the Army of the East, was altogether incorrect. He at once sent a staff officer to the Prussian advanced guard, who were still firing, requiring them to cease on the strength of the official message.

General von Manteuffel, at Arbois, had received, at five in the morning, full particulars from headquarters of the terms of the armistice, by which the army in the south was to continue operations till further orders. General orders announcing this to

all the troops were at once sent out, but did not reach the VIIth Corps till evening.

Nothing was known there of any armistice; however, the news might be on the way, and General von Zastrow granted the temporary cessation of hostilities and even released his prisoners, but without their arms.

Chaffois, with the exception of a few farmsteads, remained in the hands of the 14th Division (German), who found such quarters there as they might; the 13th retired to the villages from Sept-Fontaines to Déservillers.

January 30th.—In full confidence in the news from the seat of government, General Clinchant, on the 30th, stopped the retreat of his army. The newly-appointed Commander of the XXIVth Corps, General Comagny, also gave up his intended attempt to cut his way with 10,000 men through Colonel von Wedell's small brigade at Foncine. The other Corps remained, after the unfortunate issue of the evening's fight, close pressed at Pontarlier; but detachments of troopers were sent out one by one on the roads to Besançon and St.-Laurent, to establish a line of demarcation and also to keep up communications with the fortress and with the south.

After receiving the general orders at about eleven at night, General Zastrow informed the

French in his front of the resumption of hostilities, but restricted his immediate demands to the complete evacuation of Chaffois, which was agreed to. Otherwise the Corps remained where it was, and inactive.

General du Trossel, of the IInd Corps, had set out very early from Censeau, but the appearance of a French flag of truce, and his fear of offending against the law of nations, here too occasioned considerable delay. The woods of Frasne were not clear of the French till evening. Lieutenant-Colonel von Guretzky made his way into the village with quite a small force, and took the twelve officers and 1500 men who held it prisoners, with two colours. The 5th Brigade then also arrived at Frasne; the rest of the Corps occupied the same quarters as on the previous day.

A flag of truce had also been sent to Les-Planches, but Colonel von Wedell had simply dismissed the bearer. The outposts of the XIVth Corps did the same.

On the north of Pontarlier, General von Schmeling advanced on Pierre-Fontaine, General von Debschitz on Maiche.

January 31st.—On the morning of this day the French Colonel Varaigne made his appearance at General von Manteuffel's head-quarters at Villeneuve to propose that a cessation of hostilities for

thirty-six hours should be agreed upon, till all doubts could be removed; but this was refused, as the German General had no doubts whatever. Permission was granted for a direct application to Versailles, but it was at the same time explained that the movements of the Army of the South would not be suspended till the arrival of the answer.

On this day, however, the IInd Army Corps marched only on Dompierre on a line with the VIIth, its advanced guard pushing forward to the Drugeon on Ste.-Colombe and La-Rivière. Thence, in the evening, a company of Colberg's Grenadiers crossed the steep mountain ridge and descended on La Planée, where it took 500 prisoners. On the right a flanking detachment of two battalions and one battery under Lieutenant-Colonel Liebe marched unopposed up the gorge from Bonnevaux to Vaux, taking 2 officers and 688 men prisoners. The French then abandoned the defile of Granges-Ste.-Marie and retired on St.-Antoine in the mountains.

The Corps had found every road strewn with cast-away arms and camp utensils, and had captured 4000 men in all.

As soon as the enemy had been informed that hostilities were resumed, the 14th Division of the VIIth Corps extended on the left along the Drugeon as far as La-Vrine, whence a connection was effected with the 4th Reserve Division of the

XIVth Corps at St.-Gorgon. The 13th Division advanced on Sept-Fontaines. Pontarlier was now completely surrounded, and General von Manteuffel had fixed February 1st for the attack. The IInd Corps was to advance from the south-west, the VIIth from the north-west; General von der Goltz was to remain at Levier with a reserve force.

Meanwhile the French Commander-in-Chief had conceived doubts as to whether the communications from Government were perfectly correct. The passes over the mountains to the south were now lost, and an escape in that direction was no longer to be hoped for. General Clinchant had already sent back the baggage and ammunition columns, the sick and the exhausted, through La-Cluse under shelter of the forts of Joux and Neuv. And when in the afternoon a message from Bordeaux announced that in fact the Army of the East had been excluded from the armistice, the Commander-in-Chief called a council of war. Every General present declared that he could no longer answer for his troops. He himself therefore went out the same evening to Les-Verrières, to conclude negotiations he had already opened, by which on the following day, February 1st, the army was to cross the frontier into Switzerland by three separate roads.

To cover this retreat, the Army Reserve was to hold Pontarlier till all the baggage-trains had crossed the ridge at La-Cluse, and the XVIIIth Corps was to occupy a position between the two forts. Fortifications were at once begun. So much of the XVth Corps as had failed to get beyond Morez with the cavalry was to try to cross into Switzerland at any available point.

February 1st.—When the advanced guard of the IInd Corps (German) marched on Pontarlier from Ste.-Colombe it met with but slight resistance at the railway station. Colberg's Grenadiers took possession of the town without a struggle, took many prisoners, and then found the roads beyond entirely blocked by guns and waggons.

They were toiling along with great difficulty through deep snow. Just in front of La-Cluse the road winds up between high walls of rock to a large cirque, formed by the Doubs, which is completely commanded by the fortified castle of Joux on an isolated knoll of rock. On debouching into this valley the foremost companies were received by a hot fire. Four guns, dragged up with the greatest difficulty, could do nothing against the heavy guns of the fort, so the French themselves attacked.

Colberg's Fusiliers had meanwhile scaled the heights to the left, followed by the 2nd Battalino

of the Regiment and a battalion of the 49th, who drove the French out of the farmsteads and rifts on the plateau. The steep cliff on the right was also scaled, several files of the 49th Regiment clambered down the slopes above La-Cluse, and Colberg's Grenadiers advanced to the foot of Fort Neuv.

To take the castle by storm was obviously impossible, and the nature of the country is such as almost to prohibit the escape of a defeated enemy. Of the French, twenty-three officers and 1600 men were taken, and 400 loaded waggons; of the Germans, nineteen officers and 365 men were killed, mostly of Colberg's Regiment. The troops spent the night on the field.

As no large force could be brought into action at La-Cluse, General von Fransecky had ordered the main body of the Corps to march to the south on Ste.-Marie. To avoid the necessity of crossing the chain of the Jura, General von Hartmann marched first on Pontarlier to avail himself of the better roads from thence, but there he was detained, the fight at La-Cluse having assumed unexpected proportions. The VIIth Corps and the 4th Reserve Division also, which had reached the Doubs at noon, were equally unable to get at the enemy.

During the whole day the French columns were

crossing the Swiss frontier. The Army Reserve in Pontarlier was from the beginning carried away by the tide of baggage-waggons and drivers, and only joined the XVIIIth Corps on reaching La-Cluse. During the night they both followed in the general line of retreat. Only the cavalry and a few hundred men of the 1st Division of the XXIVth Corps reached the department of l'Ain, the next to the south; 80,000 French crossed on to Swiss soil.

General Manteuffel had transferred his head-quarters to Pontarlier. Only then, and not till night, did he hear from Berlin of the agreement between General Clinchant and the Swiss Colonel Herzog.

General von Manteuffel had achieved the important success of his three weeks' campaign through a succession of fights, but without a pitched battle since quitting the Lisaine, simply by marches; such marches, indeed, as none but well-seasoned troops could have accomplished under bold and skilful leadership, under every form of fatigue and hardship, in the worst season and through a difficult country.

Thus two French armies were now prisoners in Germany, a third interned in the capital, and the fourth disarmed on foreign soil.

General Hann von Weyhern's March on Dijon.

It only remains to glance back on the advance on Dijon which had been entrusted to the command of General Hann von Weyhern on January 26th.

On that same day Garibaldi was appealed to, to take some energetic measure against Dôle and Mouchard.

To support him, the Government, indefatigable in the evolution of new forces, were to send 15,000 Gardes-Mobiles under General Crouzat from Lyons to Lons-le-Saulnier, and a XXVIth Corps in course of formation at Châtellerault was to be detached to Beaune. As it was beyond doubt that General von Manteuffel had marched with a strong force to cut off the communications of the Army of the East, an order was transmitted on the 27th to the Commander of the forces in the Vosges, to leave only from 8000 to 10,000 men in Dijon and to advance at once with the main body beyond Dôle.

But the General was anxious for Dijon; he occupied the principal positions on the slopes of the Côte-d'Or and detached a small force to St.-Jean-de-Losne, behind the Canal-de-Bourgogne. Nothing had as yet been seen of 700 volunteers who had marched on Dôle.

Langres had shown a little more energy, several

and often successful sorties of small outpost companies and depôt troops had been led out from time to time.

General Hann von Weyhern's purpose of attacking Dijon from the south had to be abandoned, because the bridge over the Saône at St.-Jean-de-Losne had been destroyed. He therefore on the 29th crossed the river at Apremont, and on the 31st assembled his detachment at Arc-sur-Tille. Here again General Bordone, the Chief of the general staff of the Army of the Vosges, vainly appealed to the supposed armistice. On the 31st General von Kettler marched as an advanced guard on Varois. To cut off the enemy's communications with Auxonne a detachment on the left held the bridge over the Ouche at Fauverney. The first shells drove the French back on their intrenched position between St.-Apollinaire and Mirande.

When the attempt to bring about an armistice had failed, General Bordone determined to evacuate Dijon in the course of the night and retire on to really neutral ground. Thus, on February 1st, the head of the advanced guard found the outworks abandoned, and General von Kettler marched in without any opposition, just as the last train of French troops moved out of the railway-station. Sombernon and Nuits were also occupied on the 2nd.

Occupation of the Departments of the Doubs, Jura, and Côte-d'Or.

Nothing now remained for General von Manteuffel but to effect a military occupation of the Departments he had invaded, and to protect them from without.

General Pelissier was still within their limits, having reached Lons-le-Saulnier from Lyons with the 15,000 Gardes-Mobiles joined by the battalions sent back from Besançon by General Rolland, numerically a by no means insignificant force, but of no great practical use. The commanders were recommended to retire and avoid further bloodshed; and they did so, as soon as some detachments of the IInd Corps (German) advanced on Lons-le-Saulnier and St.-Laurent. Others occupied Mouthe and Les-Allemands, where twenty-eight guns had been abandoned by the French. The Swiss frontier was watched by eight battalions for security. The forts of Salins, the little fortress of Auxonne, and Besançon from the east side, were kept under observation.

Although the Department of Haute-Marne was included in the armistice, the commandant of Langres had refused to recognize the authority of the Government. So this place had to be invested, and perhaps besieged. General von der Goltz was

first ordered to march on it, and General von Krenski was already advancing with seven battalions, two squadrons and two batteries, with a siege train from Longwy, which he had reduced to capitulation on January 25th, after a bombardment of six days' duration. But it was not called into requisition at Langres.

General von Manteuffel aimed at no further tactical results; he was anxious to save his troops from further losses, and to afford them all possible respite after their unusual exertions. Not till now was the baggage brought up, even that of the staff officers having been necessarily left behind during the advance through the Jura. The troops were distributed for the sake of comfort in roomy quarters, but in readiness for action at any moment, the IInd Corps in Jura, the VIIth in Côte-d'Or, the XIVth in Doubs. But the siege of Belfort was to be stringently carried on.

THE SIEGE OF BELFORT.

Immediately after the battle on the Lisaine the forces investing Belfort were increased to 27 battalions, 6 squadrons, 6 field batteries, 24 companies of garrison artillery, and 6 companies of Sappers and Miners; in all 17,602 infantry, 4699

artillery, and 1166 engineers = 23,467 men, with 707 horses and 34 field-guns.

While the town was invested on the north and west by only a few battalions, the main force was assembled to the south and east.

On January 20th the batteries on the east opened a hot fire on Pérouse. Colonel Denfert inferred that an attack was imminent, and put four battalions of his most trusted troops into the village, which was fortified for an obstinate defence.

At about midnight, two battalions of the 67th Regiment advanced from Chêvremont without firing a shot on the Haut-Taillis wood. Only inside it there was a determined struggle, but the French were driven back on the village, and the sappers immediately intrenched the skirt of the wood towards Pérouse under a heavy fire from the fort.

Half an hour later two Landwehr battalions advanced from Bessoncourt to the copse on the north of the village. They were received with a sharp fire, but made their way onward over abattis, pits and wire-entanglements, driving the enemy back into the quarries.

A brisk fire was now opened on both sides, but the 67th presently renewed the attack, and without allowing themselves to be checked at the earth-

works forced their way into Pérouse. They took possession of the eastern end of the straggling village at about half-past two, and the party defending the quarries, finding themselves threatened, retreated. At five o'clock, Colonel Denfert surrendered the western part of the position, which was now occupied by the Germans.

They had lost eight officers and 178 men; the French left five officers and ninety-three men prisoners.

January 21st to 27th.—The next day the first parallel was thrown up along a front of 1800 mètres from Donjoutin to Haut-Taillis. Five battalions and two companies of Sappers were engaged in this work, and undisturbed by the French; but the rocky soil prohibited its being constructed of the usual width.

General von Tresckow already believed that he might proceed to storm the two forts of Perches. Two half-closed redoubts with perpendicular ditches cut three mètres deep out of the rock, casemated traverses and bomb-proof block-houses in the gorge, insured protection for the defenders. They were armed with seven 12-cm. guns in each. The works were connected by trenches, behind which a reserve force was in readiness.

On the right flank this position was protected by a battalion and counter-batteries in Le-Fourneau;

on the left the wood, which was not more than 600 paces distant, was cleared, and wire-entanglements between the stumps formed an almost impenetrable obstacle. In front the gentle slope of the hill was under the cross-fire of the two forts.

As soon as the construction of the parallel was sufficiently advanced, on the evening of the 26th, to allow of its being occupied by larger detachments, the storming was begun. Two columns of one battalion, one company of Sappers, and two guns, proceeded to the attack at daybreak on January 27th. Two companies of Schneidemühl's Landwehr Battalion advanced on the front of Basses-Perches and threw themselves on the ground within sixty to 100 mètres in front of the works. A party of sharp-shooters and a few sappers got to the ditch and unhesitatingly leaped in; the two other companies, going round the fort to the left, had reached the rear, and here too the men jumped into the ditch of the gorge. But the French, who had been driven out of their shelter-trenches, had now re-assembled, and the battalion advanced from Le-Fourneau. All the forts of the place opened fire on the clear and unprotected space in front of the parallel, and an attempt to cross it on the part of the reserve force failed. The 7th Company of the Landwehr Battalion were surrounded by

superior numbers, and after a brave struggle were for the most part taken prisoners. Most of the men in the ditch were still able to escape.

The advance of the right column against Hautes-Perches also failed. It had to cross 1000 mètres of open ground. An attempt to surround the fort did not succeed; it was impossible to get through the abattis and other obstacles under the fire of the French.

This disastrous attempt to storm the place cost 10 officers and 427 men; the slower engineering operations had to be resumed.

January 28th and February 15th.—As the Germans got nearer to the forts the flying sap could be carried forward about 300 mètres every night without any opposition from the enemy. In spite of all the difficulties caused by the nature of the soil, by February 1st the second parallel had been advanced half-way to the forts of Les Perches.

As the Fort-de-la-Justice was a particular hindrance to the works, two batteries had to be constructed to the east of Pérouse to bear upon it. Four mortar-batteries on the flank of the parallel could now fire on Haute and Basse-Perches at very short range. Three batteries were also placed in the Bois-des-Perches to attack the castle, and one on the skirt of the wood by Bavilliers against the main

work. Henceforward 1500 shells a day were fired on the fortress and outworks.

But the progress of the attack became more and more difficult. General Debschitz, by retiring, had seriously reduced the working strength of the besieging force. The loss in sappers was particularly serious, and two new companies had to be brought up from Strasburg. The bright moonlight lighting up the sheets of snow far and wide made it impossible to proceed with the flying saps. Sap-rollers were called into requisition; the heads of the saps had to be protected by sandbags and the sides by gabions, while the earth for filling had often to be brought from a long distance in the rear.

On the top of this, on February 3rd, a thaw set in, and the water from the slopes filled the trenches, so that all intercourse had to be across the open ground. Torrents of rain damaged the finished works; the parapet of the 1st parallel gave way in places and the banquette was washed away. The arming of the batteries was most laborious with the ground in such a state, and the teams of the columns and field artillery had to be employed in bringing in ammunition.

Several guns had become useless by overheating, while the enemy, by rapidly running out their guns, firing, and then running them back

again, greatly disturbed the work. Not merely was it necessary to continue the shelling of Les-Perches during the night, but a brisk rifle fire had to be kept up. Only now and then did the batteries newly placed in the parallels succeed in silencing the guns of Hautes-Perches. Gun epaulments were erected to front Fort Bellevue, and the fortified railway station and Fort-des-Barres brought into action again. That under such toil and the unfavourable weather the health of the troops must have suffered severely need not be said; the battalions could often only muster 300 men for duty.

Meanwhile, however, the artillery of the attack had become very much stronger than that of the defenders, and, in spite of every obstacle, the saps were pushed on to the edge of the ditch of Les-Perches.

On February 8th, at 1 in the afternoon, Captain Roese had the sap rollers flung into the ditch of Hautes-Perches, sprang into it with five sappers, and rapidly scaled the parapet by the steps hewn in the escarp. He was immediately followed by the trench-guard, but no French were surprised excepting a few in the casemated traverses.

The situation of the garrison of the fort had in fact become most critical. Ammunition could only be fetched under the enemy's fire, water only be

had from the pond at Vernier, and only boiled inside the works. Colonel Denfert had already given orders to conceal the matériel. Unseen by the besiegers, those guns of which the carriages could still be moved had been withdrawn, and only one company left in each fort, who, in case of a surprise, were to fire and escape. Nothing was to be found in the abandoned works but wrecked gun-carriages and four damaged guns. This fort was at once so adapted that its front should face the fortress, but at three o'clock the main work opened such a destructive fire on the lost positions that the men were forced to take shelter in the ditches.

The garrison in Basses-Perches attempted some resistance, but supported by a reserve they soon retired on Le-Fourneau, leaving five guns and much battered ordinance.

Here also the fire from the main work at first prevented the work of restoration, but four 15-cm. mortars were at last brought into the fort, and two 9-cm. guns placed on the spur of the hill to the westward, now directed their fire on Le-Fourneau and Bellevue. During the night of the 9th the works were connected by a shelter-trench 624 mètres long, and thus a third parallel was established.

By this time they were in a position to direct the immediate attack on the castle, and on this the batteries in the Bois-des-Perches and those

in the second parallel opened fire. Moitte, Justice, and Bellevue were shelled simultaneously. General von Debschitz had returned, and the investing corps was by this means again reinforced to its full numbers, and all the conditions were improved by the return of the frost. By the 13th ninety-seven guns were mounted ready in the third parallel.

The town had suffered terribly from the prolonged bombardment. Nearly all the buildings were damaged, fifteen completely burnt down, also in the adjoining villages 164 houses had been destroyed by the defenders themselves. The fortifications showed not less visible signs of destruction, particularly the castle. The stone facing of their walls had crumbled into the ditch. Half of the mantleted embrasures had been shattered, the expense powder magazines had been blown up, and a number of casemated traverses broken through. The guns in the highest positions could only be reached by ladders. The original strength of the garrison had been 372 officers and 17,322 men, but they had lost 32 officers and 4713 men, besides 336 citizens. The place was no longer tenable; in addition to this came the news that the army by whom they expected to be relieved had laid down their arms.

Under these circumstances General von Treskow summoned the commandant after such a

brave defence to surrender the fort, with a free retreat for the garrison, this stipulation having the sanction of his Majesty. The French Government themselves had given the commandant permission to accept these terms; however, Colonel Denfert insisted that he must have a more direct order. To procure this an officer was sent to Basle, whilst there was a provisional armistice.

On the 15th a treaty was signed at Versailles, which extended the armistice to the three departments which till then had been excluded from it, and also to Belfort; but the 1st article demanded the surrender of that place.

After the conclusion of the definitive treaty, the garrison, in the course of the 17th and 18th, with its arms and trains, left the precincts of the fort, and passed to L'Isle-sur-Doubs and St.-Hyppolyte on French territory. The march was effected in échelons of 1000 men at intervals of 5 km., the last accompanied by Colonel Denfert. The provisions which had been stored in the fort were carried after them in 150 Prussian baggage-waggons. At three o'clock in the afternoon, on February 18th, Lieutenant-General von Tresckow entered the place at the head of detachments of all the troops of the investing corps.

They found 341 guns, of which 56 were useless, 356 gun-carriages, of which 119 were shot to

pieces, and 22,000 stand of arms, besides considerable supplies of ammunition and provisions.

The siege had cost the Germans 88 officers and 2049 men, 245 of whom were released from imprisonment by the capitulation. Immediately the work of restoring and arming the fort began, and the levelling of the siege-works.

VII.

SURRENDER AND PEACE.

The Armistice.

On the basis of the agreement of January 28th a line of demarcation was drawn, from which both parties were to withdraw their outposts to a distance of 10 km. The line ran south from the mouth of the Seine as far as the Sarthe, crossed the Loire at Saumur, following the Creuse, turned eastward past Vierzon, Clamécy and Chagny, and then met the Swiss frontier, after passing to the north of Châlons-sur-Saône and south of Lons-le-Saulnier and St.-Laurent. The departments of Pas-de-Calais and du Nord, as well as the promontory of Havre, were particularly excluded.

The remainder of the forts held by French troops within the provinces of which the Germans had taken possession were allowed a radius in proportion to their importance.

In carrying out the details of the agreement a liberal interpretation was in several places allowed. The assent of those members of the National

Defence Committee who were in Paris was obtained; but the delegates at Bordeaux, who had hitherto conducted the war, at first held aloof, and, indeed, as yet had not been informed of the stipulations. Gambetta, however, suspended operations, but could give the commanders no more precise instructions.

General Faidherbe was thus without orders with regard to the evacuation of Dieppe and Abbeville. General von Goeben, however, deferred taking possession. On the west of the Seine, the Grand Duke was forced to announce that the non-recognition of the line of demarcation would result in an immediate recommencement of hostilities.

The commandant of the garrison at Langres also raised difficulties, and only retreated within his rayon on February 7th, as, later on, did General Rolland in Besançon. Auxonne refused to surrender the railway. Bitsch, which had not been worth the trouble of a serious attack, rejected the convention; the investment had therefore to be strengthened, and only in March, when threatened with a determined attack, did the garrison abandon its peak of rock.

Also the volunteers did not acquiesce at once, and there were skirmishes with them in various places. But after the conditions were finally settled, no more serious quarrels took place be-

tween the inhabitants and the German troops during the whole course of the armistice.

All the German corps outside Paris had occupied the forts lying in their front, more particularly the Vth that of Mont-Valérien, and the IVth the town of St.-Denis. The ground between the forts and the walls remained neutral ground, which only civilians were allowed to cross, along particular roads placed under control of German examining troops.

In their anxiety as to the indignation of the people, the French Government had so long hesitated to pronounce the word "capitulation," that now, even with free ingress of supplies, Paris was threatened with an outbreak of real famine. The unnecessary stores in the German magazines were therefore placed at the disposal of the authorities. The Commander-in-Chief, the Government authorities, and the military inspectors received orders to place no difficulties in the way of the repairing of the railways and roads in their districts, and they were even allowed to make use of the railroads which the invaders used to supply their own army, under German direction. Nevertheless, the first provision train only arrived in Paris on February 3rd, and it was the middle of the month before the French had succeeded in remedying the prevalent distress in the capital.

The German prisoners were at once given up.

The surrender of arms and military matériel followed by degrees, also the 200 million francs ransom imposed on the city.

But it was still doubtful if the party of war "à outrance" in Bordeaux would agree with the arrangement of the Paris Government, and if at last the National Assembly, which was about to be convened, would accept the conditions of peace made by the conquerors. Such measures as were necessary in case the war should break out again were therefore taken on the French as well as on the German side.

The distribution of the French army at the close of the armistice was not a favourable one.

By General Faidherbe's advice the whole Army of the North was disbanded, as being too weak to face the strength of the forces that stood opposite to them. After the XXIInd Corps had been transported by sea to Cherbourg, the Army of Bretagne, under General de Colombo, was made up of this, with the XXVIIth and part of the XIXth Corps, and, including Lipowski's volunteers, Cathelineau's and others, amounted to 150,000 men. General Loysel, with 30,000 ill-armed and inexperienced Gardes-Mobiles, remained in the trenches before Havre.

General Chanzy, after his retreat on Mayenne, had made a movement to the left, in order to assist

in a new plan of action with the IInd Army of the Loire, with its base at Caen, which, however, was never carried out. The XVIIIth, XXIst, XVIth, and XXVIth Corps stood between the lower Loire and the Cher from Angers to Châteauroux, about 100,000 men strong, the XXVth under General Pourcet at Bourges, and General de Pointe's Corps at Nevers. The Army of the Vosges had withdrawn to the south of Châlon-sur-Saône, and the remainder of the Army of the East assembled under General Crémer at Chambéry as the XXIVth Corps.

The total of all the field-troops amounted to 534,452 men. The volunteers, even the most reliable, were dismissed, and the National Guard were for the present regarded as *incapables de rendre aucun service à la guerre.* In the barracks, the manœuvring camps, and in Algiers there were still 354,000 men, and 132,000 were on the muster rolls as recruits in 1871, but had not yet been told off.

If the war should be persisted in, a plan for limiting it to defensive measures in the south-east of France had been suggested, for which, however, according to the report sent on February 8th by the Committee of Inquiry to the National Assembly, scarcely more than 252,000 men in fighting condition were available. The fleet, besides, had

given up so considerable a number of its men and guns for service on land, that it was no longer able for any great undertaking at sea.

On the German side the first consideration was to restore the troops to their war-standing, and make good the stores of matériel.

The forts round Paris were at once armed on the fronts facing the city walls. In and between these stood 680 guns, 145 of which had been taken from the French; they were more than enough to keep the restless population under control. A part of the forces which till then had been occupied with the siege, being no longer required, were removed, in order that all the troops might have better accommodation. Besides, it seemed desirable to strengthen the IInd Army, which faced the enemy's principal force; in consequence the IVth Corps marched on Nogent-le-Rotrou, the Vth on Orleans, and the IXth, which was relieved there, on Vendôme; so that now the quarters of this army extended from Alençon to Tours, and up the Loire as far as Gien and Auxerre.

The Ist Army was in the north with the VIIIth Corps on the Somme, and on both sides of the Lower Seine; in the south the Army of the South occupied the line of demarcation from Baume to Switzerland, and the country in the rear.

At the end of February the invading field-army standing on French ground consisted of:—

Infantry	.	464,221 men with 1674 guns.
Cavalry	.	55,562 horses.

Troops in garrison:—

Infantry	.	105,272 men with 68 guns.
Cavalry	.	5,681 horses.
Total	.	630,736 men and 1742 guns.

Reserve forces left in Germany:—

3,288 officers.
204,684 men.
26,603 horses.

Arrangements were made, that in case of a recommencement of hostilities, the strongest resistance could be made at all points. The armistice had nearly reached its end, and the troops had already been more closely collected to be ready to advance first of all on the offensive, towards the south, when the clerk of the Council announced that the armistice was extended to the 24th, and again prolonged to midnight on the 26th.

Considerable difficulties had arisen from the differences of opinion with regard to the election of the National Assembly, between the Government in Paris and the Delegation at Bordeaux. The

Germans wished to see the choice, not of a party, but of the whole nation, expressed by a free suffrage. But Gambetta had ruled, contrary to the conditions of the armistice, that all those who, after December 2nd, 1851, had held any position in the Imperial Government should be regarded as ineligible. It was not till the Parisian Government had obtained a majority of votes by despatching several of its members to Bordeaux, and till the dictator had resigned on February 6th, that the voting went on quickly and unhindered.

The deputies were already assembled in Bordeaux by the 12th. M. Thiers was elected chief of the executive, and went to Paris on the 19th with Jules Favre, determined to end the aimless war at any cost.

Negotiations for peace were opened, and after five days' violent debating, when at last the Germans consented to restore Belfort to the French, the preliminaries were signed on the afternoon of the 26th.

France agreed to surrender to Germany a part of Lorraine and Alsace, with the exception of Belfort, and a war indemnity of five milliards of francs.

The evacuation of the places that the Germans had taken was to begin immediately on the ratification of the treaty, and be continued by degrees in proportion as the money was paid. As long as the

German troops remained on French soil they were to be fed at the expense of France. On the other hand; no further requisitions were to be made by the Germans. Immediately after the first evacuation the French forces were to retire behind the Loire, with the exception of 40,000 men in Paris and the necessary garrisons in the fortresses.

After the ratification of these preliminaries, further terms were to be discussed in Brussels, and the return of the French prisoners would begin. Thus the armistice was prolonged to March 12th; but it was in the option of either of the belligerent powers to end it after March 3rd by giving three days' notice.

Finally, it was stipulated that the German Army should have the satisfaction of marching into Paris, and remaining there till the ratification of the treaty; but they would restrict themselves to the quarter of the town lying between Point-du-jour and the Rue du Faubourg-St.-Honoré. This was occupied on March 1st, after a parade in Longchamps before his Majesty of 30,000 men, consisting of 11,000 of the VIth, 11,000 of the IInd Bavarian, and 8000 of the XIth Army Corps. On the 3rd and 5th of March they were to have been relieved by other detachments of the same strength, but M. Thiers succeeded by March 1st in getting the National Assembly at Bordeaux to

accept the treaty, after the deposition of the Napoleonic dynasty had been voted. The exchange of ratifications took place in the afternoon of the 2nd, and on the 3rd the first detachment marched back into quarters.

THE RETURN MARCH OF THE GERMAN ARMY.

By the IIIrd Article, the whole of the land between the Seine and the Loire, excepting Paris, was to be evacuated with as little delay as possible by both armies; the right bank of the former river, on the other hand, was only to be cleared after the conclusion of the definitive treaty of peace. Even then the six eastern departments were still left in possession of the Germans as a pledge for the last three milliards; not, however, occupied by more than 50,000 men.

The order of march was drawn up at headquarters, with a view no less to the comfort of the troops than to the re-formation of the original order of battle, and the possibility of rapid assembly in case of need.

The forces told off for permanent occupation of the ceded provinces marched thither at once.

The reserve and Landwehr troops in Germany were disbanded, as well as the Baden contingent, which, however, for the present remained there as a

mobilized force. The Army head-quarters in Lorraine, Rheims, and Versailles were broken up, and their authority handed over to the Generals in command; but in order to maintain order in the rear of the army; the VIth and XIIth Corps, as well as the Wurtemburg Field Division, were placed under the immediate command of the Army head-quarters.

By March 31st the Army had taken possession of the newly-acquired territory, bounded on the west by the Seine from its source to its mouth.

The Ist Army was in the departments of Seine-Inférieure and Somme, the IInd in front of Paris, in the departments of Oise and Seine-et-Marne, the IIIrd in the departments of Aube and Haute-Marne, the Army of the South in the last hostile districts. The forts of Paris on the left bank were given up to the French authorities; the siege park and the captured war matériel had been carried off. In consideration of the wishes of the French Government, in order that the National Assembly might be allowed as early as possible to sit at Versailles, the head-quarters were broken up and transferred to Ferrières, even sooner than had been agreed. On March 15th his Majesty left Nancy for Berlin.

All the troops that were left before Paris were placed under the command of the Crown Prince of

Saxony, and General von Manteuffel was nominated Commander of the Army of Occupation.

At the moment when France had freed herself by a heavy sacrifice, an enemy of the most dangerous character appeared from within: the Commune in Paris.

The 40,000 men who had been left there proved themselves unequal to the task of keeping the rebellious movement under control; even during the siege it had on several occasions betrayed its presence, and now broke out in open civil war. Large masses of people, encouraged by the National Guard and the Garde-Mobile, took possession of the guns and set themselves up in armed opposition to the Government. M. Thiers had already, by March 18th, summoned to Versailles such regiments as could still be trusted, to withdraw them from the dangers of party influence, and for the protection of the National Assembly there. The French capital remained destroyed, and plundered by the French troops.

The Germans could have easily and quickly put an end to the matter, but what Government would allow its rights to be established by foreign bayonets? The German Commanders-in-Chief limited themselves to forbidding any rebellious disturbances within their own district, and to preventing any further marching into Paris from out-

side. The work of disarming, which had commenced, was interrupted; the troops of the IIIrd Corps were drawn closer to the forts, and the outposts were replaced along the line of demarcation, where 200,000 men could be collected within two days.

The authorities in Paris, however, announced that any attempt to arm the fronts facing the Germans would result in an instantaneous bombardment of the city. The rebels, however, were fully occupied in destroying and burning, and in executing their superiors in the interior of Paris. They did not turn against their foreign enemy, but against the Government chosen by the nation, and prepared for an attack on Versailles.

The leaders of the State who were there, bound by the conditions of the treaty, were almost defenceless; meanwhile the Germans were prepared and willing to march up a reinforcement of 80,000 men, troops from Besançon, Auxerre and Cambrai; and their transport would be furthered by the German troops in occupation of the districts through which they would have to pass.

The releasing of the prisoners had, on the contrary, been reduced. And these were, for the most part, the best disciplined of the forces; but they might not improbably join the hostile party, so at first only 20,000 troops of the line were set free.

General MacMahon marched on April 4th with the Government troops towards Paris, and entered the city on the 21st. As they then were engaged for eight days in barricade fighting, and troops of fugitives threatened to break through the German lines, the IIIrd Army was ordered to form in closer order. The outposts advanced almost to the gates of the city, and barred all communication through them until, at the end of the month, Paris was again in the control of the Government.

In the meantime, the negotiations commenced in Brussels and continued in Frankfort were making rapid progress, and by May 10th the definite treaty of peace, based on the preliminaries, was ready to be signed. The ratification on both sides followed within the appointed time of ten days.

Thus a war, carried on with such a vast expenditure of force on both sides, was brought to an end by incessant and restless energy in the short period of seven months.

Even in the first four weeks eight battles took place, under which the French Empire collapsed, and the French Army was swept from the field.

Fresh forces, massive but incompetent, equalized the original numerical superiority of the Germans,

and it needed twelve more battles to secure the decisive siege of the enemy's capital.

Twenty fortified places were taken, and not a single day passed without a struggle, great or small.

The war had cost the Germans many victims; they lost 6,247 officers, 123,453 men, 1 flag, 6 guns.

The total losses of the French were incalculable; in prisoners only they amounted to :—

In Germany . .	11,860 officers,	371,981 men.
In Paris . .	7,456 „	241,686 „
Disarmed in Switzerland . .	2,192 „	88,381 „
	21,508 officers,	702,048 men.

107 flags and eagles, 1,915 field-guns, 5,526 fort-guns were captured.

Strasburg and Metz, which had been alienated from Germany in a time of weakness, were reconquered, and the German Empire had risen anew.

THE END.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

Memorandum on the Councils of War said to have been held during the Wars under King William.

In the accounts of historical events, as they are handed down to posterity, mistakes assume the form of legends which it is not always easy subsequently to disprove.

Among others is the fable which very circumstantially ascribes the great decisions taken in the course of the German campaigns, before and in 1870-71, to the consultations of councils of war previously convened.

For instance, the battle of Königgrätz.

I can relate in a few lines the circumstances under which an event of such far-reaching importance had birth.

The Master of the Ordnance, Feldzeugmeister Benedek, had, in his advance to the northward, to secure himself against the IInd Prussian Army marching on the east over the mountains of Schleswig. To this end four of his Corps had one after another been pushed forward on his flank, and had all been beaten within three days. They now joined the main body of the Austrian Army, which had meanwhile reached Dubenetz.

Here, then, on June 30th, almost the whole of the Austrian forces were standing actually within the line of operations between the two Prussian armies; but the Ist was already fighting its way to Gitschin, designated

from Berlin as the point on which they were to concentrate, and the IInd had also advanced close on the Upper Elbe; thus they were both so near that the enemy could not attack the one without the other falling on his rear. His strategic advantages were nullified by the tactical disadvantage.

Under these circumstances, and having already lost 40,000 men in previous battles, General Benedek gave up the advance, and during the night of June 30th began his retreat on Königgrätz.

The movement of six Army Corps and four Cavalry Divisions, marching in only four columns, which were necessarily very deep, could not be accomplished in the course of a single day. They halted in close order between Trotina and Lipa; but when on July 2nd they were still there, it was owing to the extreme fatigue of the troops, and the difficulty, nay, impossibility, of withdrawing so large a body of men beyond the Elbe, under the eyes of an active enemy and by a limited number of passages. In fact, the Austrian general could no longer manœuvre; he must fight.

It is a noteworthy fact that neither his advance on Dubenetz nor his retreat on Lipa was known to the Prussians. These movements were concealed from the IInd Army by the Elbe, and the cavalry of the Ist at that time constituted a useless mass of 8000 horse remaining with the Corps. The four squadrons attached to each Infantry Division were of course not able to effect the reconnoissance, as subsequently was done in 1870 by a more advantageous plan of formation.

Thus at head-quarters at Gitschin, where the King was, nothing certain was known. It was supposed that the main body of the hostile army was still advancing, and

that it would draw up in a position with the Elbe in its front and the wings at the fortress of Joseph-stadt and Königgrätz. There were these two alternatives—either to outflank this strong position, or attack in front.

By the first the communications of the Austrian Army would be so seriously threatened at Pardubitz that it might be compelled to retreat. But with such a movement the IInd Prussian Army must take the place of the Ist and cross over to the right bank of the Elbe. At the same time the flank movement of the Ist Army, close past the enemy's front, might easily be interfered with, if passages enough were opened.

In the second case, success could only be hoped for if an advance of the IInd Army on the right wing of the enemy's position could be combined with the attack in front. For this it must be kept on the left bank.

The separation of the two armies, which was for the present intentionally maintained, allowed of either plan being followed; but mine was the serious responsibility of advising his Majesty which.

To keep both open for the present, General von Herwarth was ordered to occupy Pardubitz, and the Crown Prince to remain on the left bank of the Elbe, to reconnoitre along that river as well as the Aupa and the Metau, and remove all obstacles which might oppose a crossing in either direction. At last, on July 2nd, Prince Frederick Charles was ordered, in the event of his finding a large force in front of the Elbe, to attack at once. But, on the evening of that day, it was announced to the Prince that the whole Austrian Army had marched on the Bistritz; and, in obedience to instructions, he at once ordered the Ist Army and the

Army of the Elbe to unite close in front of the enemy by daybreak next morning.

General von Voigt-Rhetz brought the news at eleven o'clock in the evening to the King at Gitschin, and he sent him over to me.

This news settled all doubts and lifted a weight from my mind. "Thank God!" I said, sprang out of bed, and hastened across to the King, who was lodged on the other side of the Market Place.

His Majesty also had gone to rest in his little camp-bed. After a brief explanation on my part, he said he fully understood the situation, decided on giving battle next day with all three armies at once, and desired me to transmit the necessary orders to the Crown Prince, who was at once to cross the Elbe.

The whole interview with his Majesty had lasted barely ten minutes. No one else was present.

This was the Council of War before Königgrätz.

General von Podbielski and Major Count Wartensleben shared my quarters. The orders to the IInd Army were drawn up forthwith and despatched in duplicate by two different routes before midnight. One, carried by General von Voigt-Rhetz, informed Prince Frederick Charles of the steps to be taken; the other was sent direct to Koniginhof.

In the course of his night-ride of above six miles (German), Lieutenant-Colonel Count Finckenstein had to pass the outposts of the Ist Army Corps, which was most to the rear. He handed to the officer on duty a special letter to be forwarded immediately to the general in command, ordering an immediate muster of the troops and an independent advance, even before orders should reach him from the Crown Prince.

The position of the Austrians on July 3rd had a front of not more than a German mile. The Prussian armies advanced on it in a semicircle of about five miles in extent. But while in the centre the Ist and IInd Corps of the Ist Army stood before daylight close in front of the enemy, on the right wing General von Herwarth had to advance on the Bistritz from Smidar in the dark, by very bad roads, above two miles; and on the left, orders from head-quarters could not even reach the Crown Prince before four in the morning. It was therefore decided that an engagement was to be fought with the centre to detain the Austrian Army for some hours.

Above all, any possible offensive move on the part of the enemy must here be met, and for this the whole IIIrd Corps and cavalry stood at hand; but the battle could only be decided by a flank movement by both the Prussian wings at once.

I had ridden out early to the heights above Sadowa with my officers, and at eight o'clock the King also arrived there.

It was a dull morning, and from time to time a shower fell. The horizon was dim, for on the right the white clouds of smoke showed that the head of the Ist Army was already fighting some way off, outside the villages on the Bistritz. On the left, in the woods of Swip, brisk rifle-firing was audible. Behind the King, besides his staff were his royal guests with their numerous suites of adjutants, equerries, and led-horses, in number as many as two squadrons. An Austrian battery seemed to have selected them to aim at, and compelled him to move away with a smaller following.

Soon after, Count Wartensleben and I rode through Sadowa, which the enemy had already abandoned. The

vanguard of the 8th Division had drawn up the guns under cover of the tirailleurs who had been sent forward, but several shells fell there from a large battery at the skirt of the wood. As we rode down the road we admired the coolness of a huge ox which went on its way heedless of the shot, and seemed determined to charge the enemy's position.

The formidable array of the IIIrd and Xth Austrian Corps' Artillery opposite the wood now prevented any attempt to break through it, and I was in time to countermand an order which had been given to do so.

Meanwhile, further to the left, General von Transecky had already acted on the offensive. After a sharp struggle he had driven the enemy out of the Swip woods, and got through to the further side. Against him he had the IVth Austrian Corps; but now the IInd and part of the IIIrd Corps turned on the 7th Division; fifty-one battalions against fourteen. In the thick brushwood all the detachments had got mixed, individual command was impossible, and, in spite of our obstinate resistance, whole troops were taken prisoners and others dispersed.

Such a rabble rushed out of the wood at the very moment when the King and his staff rode up; his Majesty looked on with some displeasure,[1] but the wounded officer who was trying to keep his little troop together at once led them back into the fight. In spite of heavy losses the division got possession of the northern side of the wood. It had drawn down itself

[1] I have a history of the war, published at Tokio, in the Japanese language, with very original illustrations. One of these has for its title, "The King scolding the Army."

very large forces of the enemy which were subsequently missing in the positions they ought to have defended.

It was now eleven o'clock. The head of the Ist Army had crossed the Bistritz and taken most of the villages along its banks; but these were only the enemy's outposts, which he had no serious intention of guarding. His main Corps held a position in the rear from whence, with 250 guns, it commanded the open plains which the Prussians must cross in order to attack. On the right, General von Herwarth had reached the Bistritz, but on the left nothing was yet to be seen of the Crown Prince.

The battle had come to a standstill. In the centre the Ist Army was still fighting round the villages on the Bistritz; the cavalry could not get forward, and the artillery found no good position to occupy. The troops had been for five hours under the enemy's hottest fire, without food, for there had not been time to prepare it.

Some doubt as to the issue of the battle existed probably in many minds; perhaps in that of Count Bismarck as he offered me a cigar. As I was subsequently informed, he took it for a good sign that of two cigars I coolly took the best.

The King asked me at about this time what I thought of the prospects of the battle. I replied, "Your Majesty to-day will not only win the battle, but decide the war."

It could not be otherwise.

We had the advantage in numbers,[2] which in war is

[2] During a long peace the sphere of action of the War Minister's department and the General Staff were not distinctly defined The providing for the troops in peace was the function of the former, and in war-time a number of official duties which could be superintended by the central authorities at home. Thus the place of

never to be despised; and our IInd Army must come up in the flank and rear of the Austrians.

At about 1.30 a white cloud was seen on the height crowned with trees and visible from afar, on which our field-glasses had been centred. It was indeed not yet the IInd Army, but the smoke of the fire opened on its advance. The joyful shout, "The Crown Prince is coming!" ran through the ranks. I sent the desired news to General von Herwarth, who, meanwhile, had carried Problus from the Saxons in spite of a heroic defence.

The IInd Army had started at 7.30 in the morning; only the Ist Corps had waited till about 9.15. The advance by bad roads, in part across the fields, had taken much time; the ridge of hills stretching from Horenowes to Trotina, in the march, if efficiently held must be a serious obstacle; but in their eager pursuit of Fransecky's Division the enemy's right wing had wheeled to the left, so that it lay open to some extent to an attack in the rear.

The Crown Prince's progress was not visible to us, but at about half-past three the King ordered the advance of the Ist Army.

the Minister of War was not at head-quarters, but at Berlin. The Chief of the General Staff, on the other hand, from the moment when the mobilization is ordered, assumes the whole responsibility for the marching and transport already prepared for during peace, both for the first assembling of the forces and for their subsequent employment, for which he has only to ask the consent of the Commander-in-Chief—always, with us, the King.

How necessary this severance of authority is, I learnt in June, 1866. Without my knowledge the order had been given for the VIIth Corps to remain on the Rhine. It was only by my representations that the 16th Division was also moved up into Bohemia, and our numerical superiority thus brought up to a decisive strength.

As we came out of the wood of Sadowa we found still a part of the great battery which had so long prevented us from debouching there, but the teams and gunners lay dead by the wrecked guns. There was nothing else to be seen of the enemy for a long way round.

The Austrian retreat from the position, stormed on both sides, had become inevitable, and had, in fact, been effected some time since. Their capital artillery, firing on to the last moment, had screened their retreat and given the infantry a long start. Crossing the Bistritz seriously delayed the progress, especially of the cavalry, so that only isolated detachments came up with the enemy.

We rode at a smart gallop across the wide field of battle, without looking much about us at the scene of horror. On the other side we joined our three armies which had at last pushed through the narrow place from various directions, and got much mixed. It took twenty-four hours to remedy the confusion and re-form the companies; pursuit was at that moment impossible, but the victory was complete.

The exhausted men at once sought a spot to rest on in the villages or the open country where best they might. Anything that came to hand by way of food was of course taken; my wandering ox probably among the rest. The death-cries of pigs and geese were heard; but necessity knows no law, and the baggage-waggons were naturally not on the spot.

The King, too, remained at a hamlet on the field. Only I and my two officers had to ride five miles back to Gitschin, where the offices were.

We had set out at four in the morning, and had been fourteen hours in the saddle. In the sudden emerging no one had thought of providing himself with food. An

Uhlan of the 2nd Regiment had given me part of a sausage-bread he had got. On our way back we met the endless train of provision and ammunition waggons, often extending all across the road. We did not reach our quarters till midnight. There was nothing to eat even here at this hour, but I was so exhausted that I threw myself on my bed in my great-coat and scarf, and fell asleep instantly. Next morning new orders had to be drawn out and laid before his Majesty at Horitz.

The Great King had struggled for seven years to reduce the might of Austria, and his more fortunate and more powerful grandson had achieved it in as many weeks. The campaign had proved decisive in the first eight days from June 27th to July 3rd.

The war of 1866 was entered on not because the existence of Prussia was threatened, nor in obedience to public opinion and the voice of the people: it was a struggle, long foreseen and calmly prepared for, recognized as a necessity by the Cabinet, not for territorial aggrandizement or material advantage, but for an ideal end—the establishment of power. Not a foot of land was exacted from conquered Austria, but it had to renounce all part in the hegemony of Germany.

The Imperial family alone were to blame if the old Empire had now for centuries allowed domestic politics to override German national politics. Austria had exhausted her strength in conquests south of the Alps, and left the western German provinces unprotected, instead of following the road pointed out by the course of the Danube. Its centre of gravity lay out of Germany; Prussia's lay within it. Prussia felt itself strong enough and called upon to assume the leadership of the German races. The regrettable but unavoidable exclusion of

one of them from the new Empire could only be to a small extent remedied by a subsequent alliance. But Prussia has become immeasurably greater without Austria, than it was before with Austria.

But all this has nothing to do with the legends of which I was speaking.

One has been sung in verse, and in fine verse too.

The scene is Versailles. The French are making a sortie from Paris, and the generals, instead of leading their troops, are assembled to consider whether head-quarters may safely remain any longer at Versailles. Opinions are divided, no one dares speak out. The Chief of the General Staff, who is above all called on to express his views, remains silent. The consternation seems to be great. Only the War Minister rises and protests with the greatest emphasis against a measure so injurious from a political and military point of view as a removal. He is warmly thanked by the King as being the only man who has the courage to speak the truth freely and fearlessly.

The truth is that while the King and his whole escort had ridden out to the Vth Army Corps, the Chamberlain in his over-anxiety had the horses put to the royal carriages, and this became known in the town; and this indeed may have excited all sorts of hopes in the sanguine inhabitants.

Versailles was protected by four Army Corps. It never entered anybody's head to think of leaving it.

I can positively assert no Council of War was ever held either in 1866 or 1870-71.

Excepting on the march or in days of battle, an audience was regularly held by his Majesty at ten o'clock, at which I, accompanied by the Quartermaster-

General, laid the latest reports and news before him, and made our suggestions on that basis. The Chief of the War Cabinet and the Minister of War were also present, and, so long as the head-quarters of the IIIrd Army were at Versailles, the Crown Prince also, but all merely as listeners. The King occasionally required them to give him information on one point or another; but I do not remember that he ever asked for advice concerning the operations in the field or the suggestions I made.

These, which I always discussed beforehand with my staff officers, were, on the contrary, generally maturely weighed by his Majesty. He always pointed out with a military eye and an invariably correct estimate of the position, all the objections that might be raised to their execution; but as in war every step is beset with danger, the plans laid before him were invariably adopted.

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